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THE
OBSERVER:

BEING A COLLECTION OF
MORAL, LITERARY AND FAMILIAR
ESSAYS.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

—MULTORUM PROVIDUS URRES
ET MORES HOMINUM INSPEXIT.—
(HORAT.)

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR C. DILLY IN THE POULTRY.
M.DCC.LXXXVI.



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THE

THE
O B S E R V E R.

N° LXI.

*Primum Graius homo mortales tollere contra
Est oculos ausus——*

(LUCRETIVS.)

*At length a mighty man of Greece began
T' assert the natural liberty of man.*

(CREECH.)

THERE are so many young men of fortune and spirit in this kingdom, who, without the trouble of resorting to the founder of their philosophy, or giving themselves any concern about the *Graius homo* in my motto, have nevertheless fallen upon a practice so consentaneous to the doctrines, which he laid down by system, that

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I much

I much question if any of his profess scholars ever did him greater credit, since the time he first struck out the popular project of driving all religion out of the world, and introducing pleasure and voluptuousness in its stead.

*Quare religio pedibus subiecta vicissim
Obteritur, nos exæquat victoria cælo.*

" We tread religion under foot and rise

" With self-created glory to the skies."

So far from meaning to oppose myself to such a host of gay and happy mortals, I wish to gain a merit with them by adding to their stock of pleasures, and suggesting some hints of enjoyments, which may be new to them; a discovery which they well know was considered by the kings of Persia, (who practised their philosophy in very ancient times) as a service of such importance to all the sect, (who had even then worn out most of their old pleasures) that a very considerable reward was offered to the inventor of any new one. How the stock at present stands with our modern voluptuaries I cannot pretend to say but I suspect from certain symptoms, which have fallen under my observation, that it is nearly run out with some amongst them; to such in particular I flatter myself my discoveries will prove of value, and I have for their

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their use composed the following meditation, which I have put together in the form of a soliloquy, solving it step by step as regularly as any proposition in Euclid, and I will boldly vouch it to be as mathematically true. If there is any one *postulatum* in the whole, which the truest voluptuary will not admit to be orthodox Epicurism, I will consent to give up my system for nonsense and myself for an impostor; I condition only with the pupil of pleasure, that whilst he reads he will reflect, that he will deal candidly with the truth, and that he will once in his life permit a certain faculty called reason, which I hope he is possessed of, to come into use upon this occasion; a faculty, which, though he may not hitherto have employed it, is yet capable of supplying him with more true and lasting pleasures, than any his philosophy can furnish.

I now recommend him to the following meditation, which I have entitled—

“THE VOLUPTUARY’S SOLILOQUY.

“I FIND myself in possession of an estate,
 “which has devolved upon me without any
 “pains of my own: I have youth and health to
 “enjoy it, and I am determined so to do:
 “Pleasure is my object, and I must therefore so
 “contrive as to make that object lasting and

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“satisfactory : If I throw the means away, I
 “can no longer compass the end ; this is self-
 “evident ; I perceive therefore that I must not
 “game ; for though I like play, I do not like to
 “lose that, which alone can purchase every
 “pleasure I propose to enjoy ; and I do not see
 “that the chance of winning other people’s
 “money can compensate for the pain I must
 “suffer if I lose my own : An addition to my
 “fortune can only give superfluities ; the loss of
 “it may take away even necessities ; and in the
 “mean time I have enough for every other gra-
 “tification but the desperate one of deep play :
 “It is resolved therefore that I will not be a
 “gamester : There is not common sense in the
 “thought, and therefore I renounce it.
 “But if I give up gaming, I will take my
 “share of pleasure ; that I am determined upon.
 “I must therefore ask myself the question, what
 “is pleasure ? Is it high living and hard drink-
 “ing ? I have my own choice to make, there-
 “fore I must take some time to consider of it.
 “There is nothing very elegant in it : I must
 “confess ; a glutton is but a sorry fellow, and a
 “drunkard is a beast : Besides I am not sure my
 “constitution can stand against it : I shall get
 “the gout, that would be the devil ; I shall grow
 “out of all shape ; I shall have a red face full of
 “blotches,

“ blotches, a foul breath and be loathsome to the
 “ women: I cannot bear to think of that, for I
 “ doat upon the women, and therefore adieu to
 “ the bottle and all its concomitants; I prefer the
 “ favours of the fair sex to the company of the
 “ soakers, and so there is an end to all drinking;
 “ I will be sober, only because I love pleasure.

“ But if I give up wine for women, I will re-
 “ pay myself for the sacrifice; I will have the
 “ finest girls that money can purchase—Money,
 “ did I say? What a sound has that!—Am I to
 “ buy beauty with money; and cannot I buy
 “ love too? for there is no pleasure even in
 “ beauty without love. I find myself gravelled
 “ by this unlucky question: Mercenary love!
 “ that is nonsense; it is flat hypocrisy; it is dis-
 “ gusting. I should loath the fawning caresses
 “ of a dissembling harlot, whom I pay for false
 “ fondness: I find I am wrong again: I cannot
 “ fall in love with a harlot; she must be a modest
 “ woman; and when that befalls me, what then?
 “ Why then, if I am terribly in love indeed,
 “ and cannot be happy without her, there is no
 “ other choice left me; I think I must even
 “ marry her! nay I am sure I must; for if plea-
 “ sure leads that way, pleasure is my object, and
 “ marriage is my lot: I am determined therefore
 “ to marry, only because I love pleasure.

“ Well ! now that I have given up all other
 “ women for a wife, I am resolved to take pleasure
 “ enough in the possession of her ; I must be cau-
 “ tious therefore that nobody else takes the same
 “ pleasure too ; for otherwise how have I bettered
 “ myself ? I might as well have remained upon
 “ the common. I should be a fool indeed to pay
 “ such a price for a purchase, and let in my
 “ neighbours for a share ; therefore I am deter-
 “ mined to keep her to myself, for pleasure is my
 “ only object, and this I take it is a sort of plea-
 “ sure, that does not consist in participation.

“ The next question is, how I must contrive
 “ to keep her to myself.—Not by force ; not by
 “ locking her up ; there is no pleasure in that
 “ notion ; compulsion is out of the case ; in-
 “ clination therefore is the next thing ; I must
 “ make it her own choice to be faithful : It
 “ seems then to be incumbent upon me to make
 “ a wise choice, to look well before I fix upon a
 “ wife, and to use her well, when I have fixed ;
 “ I will be very kind to her, because I will not
 “ destroy my own pleasure ; and I will be very
 “ careful of the temptations I expose her to,
 “ for the same reason. She shall not lead the
 “ life of your fine town ladies ; I have a charm-
 “ ing place in the country ; I will pass most of
 “ my time in the country ; there she will be safe
 “ and

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"and I shall be happy. I love pleasure, and
 "therefore I will have little to do with that
 "curst intriguing town of London; I am deter-
 "mined to make my house in the country as
 "pleasant as it is possible.

"But if I give up the gaieties of a town life,
 "and the club, and the gaming-table, and the
 "girls, for a wife and the country, I will have
 "the sports of the country in perfection; I will
 "keep the best pack of hounds in England, and
 "hunt every day in the week.—But hold a mo-
 "ment there! what will become of my wife all
 "the while I am following the hounds? Will
 "she follow nobody; will nobody follow her?
 "A pretty figure I shall make, to be chasing a
 "stag and come home with the horns. At least
 "I shall not risque the experiment; I shall not
 "like to leave her at home, and I cannot take
 "her with me, for that would spoil my pleasure;
 "and I hate a horse-dog woman; I will keep
 "no whipper-in in petticoats. I perceive there-
 "fore I must give up the hounds, for I am de-
 "termined nothing shall stand in the way of my
 "pleasure.

"Why then I must find out some amuse-
 "ments that my wife can partake in; we must
 "ride about the park in fine weather; we must
 "visit the grounds, and the gardens, and plan

“out improvements, and make plantations; it
“will be rare employment for the poor people
“—That is a thought that never struck me
“before; methinks there must be a great deal
“of pleasure in setting the poor to work—I shall
“like a farm for the same reason; and my wife
“will take pleasure in a dairy; she shall have
“the most elegant dairy in England; and I will
“build a conservatory, and she shall have such
“plants and such flowers!—I have a notion I
“shall take pleasure in them myself—And then
“there is a thousand things to do within-doors;
“it is a fine old mansion that is the truth of it:
“I will give it an entire repair; it wants new
“furniture; that will be very pleasant work
“for my wife: I perceive I could not afford to
“keep hounds and do this into the bargain.
“But this will give me the most pleasure all to
“nothing, and then my wife will partake of it
“—And we will have music and books—I re-
“collect that I have got an excellent library—
“There is another pleasure I had never thought
“of—And then no doubt we shall have children,
“and they are very pleasant company, when they
“can talk and understand what is said to them;
“and now I begin to reflect, I find there is a
“vast many pleasures in the life I have chalked
“out, and what a fool should I be to throw
“away

N° 61. THE OBSERVER. 9

“away my money at the gaming-table, or my
 “health at any table, or my affections upon har-
 “lots, or my time upon hounds and horses, or
 “employ either money, health, affections, or
 “time, in any other pleasures or pursuits, than
 “these, which I now perceive will lead me to
 “solid happiness in this life, and secure a good
 “chance for what may befall me hereafter !”

N° LXII.

Pudore et liberalitate liberos

Retinere satius esse credo, quam metu.

(TERENT.)

Better far

To bind your children to you by the ties

Of gentleness and modesty than fear.

(COLMAN.).

GEMINUS and Gemellus were twin-sons
 of a country gentleman of fortune, whom
 I shall call Euphorion; when they were of age
 to begin their grammar learning, Euphorion
 found himself exceedingly puzzled to decide
 upon the best mode of education; he had read
 several treatises on the subject, which instead of
 clearing up his difficulties had increased them;
 he

he had consulted the opinions of his friends and neighbours, and he found these so equally divided, and so much to be said on both sides, that he could determine upon neither; unfortunately for Euphorion he had no partialities of his own, for the good gentleman had had little or no education himself: The clergyman of the parish preached up the moral advantages of private tuition, the lawyer, his near neighbour, dazzled his imagination with the connections and knowledge of the world to be gained in a public school. Euphorion perceiving himself in a strait between two roads, and not knowing which to prefer, cut the difficulty by taking both; so that Geminus was put under private tuition of the clergyman above mentioned, and Gemellus was taken up to town by the lawyer to be entered at Westminster school.

Euphorion having thus put the two systems fairly to issue waited the event, but every time that Gemellus came home at the breaking-up, the private system rose and the public sunk on the comparison in the father's mind, for Gemellus's appearance no longer kept pace with his brother's; wild and ragged as a colt, battered and bruised and dishevelled he hardly seemed of the same species with the spruce little master in the parlour; Euphorion was shocked to find that his
manners

manners were no less altered than his person, for he herded with the servants in the stable, was for ever under the horses' heels, and foremost in all games and sports with the idle boys of the parish; this was a fore offence in Euphorion's eyes, for he abhorred low company, and being the first gentleman of his family seemed determined to keep up to the title: Misfortunes multiplied upon poor Gemellus, and every thing conspired to put him in complete disgrace, for he began to corrupt his brother, and was detected in debauching him to a game at cricket, from which Geminus was brought home with a bruise on the shin, that made a week's work for the surgeon; and what was still worse, there was conviction of the blow being given by a ball from Gemellus's batt; this brought on a severe interdiction of all further fellowship between the brothers, and they were effectually kept apart for the future.

A suspicion now took place in the father's mind, that Gemellus had made as little progress in his books, as he had in his manners; but as this was a discovery he could not venture upon in person, he substituted his proxy for the undertaking. Gemellus had so many evasions and *alibis* in resource, that it was long before the clergyman could bring the case to a hearing, and

the report was not very favourable in any sense to the unlucky school-boy, for Gemellus had been seized with a violent fit of sneezing in the crisis of examination, to the great annoyance of the worthy preceptor, who was forced to break up the conference *re infelâ* and in some disorder, for amongst other damages; which had accrued to his person and apparel, he presented himself to the wondering eyes of Euphorion with a huge black bush wig stuck full of paper darts, and as thickly spiked as the back of a porcupine. The culprit was instantly summoned and made no other defence, than that *they slipt out of his hand, and he did not go to do it.* "Are these your Westminster tricks, firrah?" cried the angry father, and aiming a blow at his scull with his crutch, brought the wrong person to the ground; for the nimble culprit had slipt out of the way, and Euphorion, being weak and gouty, literally followed the blow and was laid sprawling on the floor: Gemellus flew to his assistance, and jointly with the parson got him on his legs, but his anger was now so enflamed, that Gemellus was ordered out of the room under sentence of immediate dismissal to school; Euphorion declared he was so totally spoiled, that he would not be troubled with him any longer in his family, else he would instantly have reversed his education;

it

it was now too late, (he observed to the parson, whilst he was drawing the paper darts from his wig,) and therefore he should return to the place from whence he came, and order was given for passing him off by the stage next morning.

A question was asked about his holiday-task, but Geminus, who had now entered his father's chamber, in a mild and pacifying tone assured Euphorion that his brother was provided in that respect, for that he himself had done the task for him: This was pouring oil upon flame, and the idle culprit was once more called to the bar to receive a most severe reprimand for his meanness in imposing on his brother's good-nature, with many dunces and blockheads cast in his teeth, for not being able to do his own business. Gemellus was nettled with these reproaches, but more than all with his brother for betraying him, and, drawing the task out of his pocket, rolled it in his hand and threw it towards the author, saying "he was a shabby fellow; and for his part he scorned to be obliged to any body, that would do a favour and then boast of it."—Recollecting himself in a moment afterwards, he turned towards his father, and begged his pardon for all offences; "he hoped he was not such a blockhead, but he could do his task, if he pleased, and he would instantly set about it
"and

"and send it down, to convince him, that he could do his own business without any body's help." So saying, he went out of the room in great haste, and in less time than could be expected brought down a portion of *sacred exercise* in hexameter verse, which the parson candidly declared was admirably well performed for his years, adding, that although it was not without faults, there were some passages, that bespoke the dawning of genius—"I am obliged to you, Sir," said Gemellus, "it is more than I deserve, and I beg your pardon for the impertinence I have been guilty of."—The tears started in his eyes as he said this, and he departed without any answer from his father.

He had no sooner left the room than he perceived Geminus had followed him, and, being piqued with his late treatment, turned round and with a disdainful look said—"Brother Geminus, you ought to be ashamed of yourself; if you was at Westminster, there is not a boy in the school would acknowledge you after so scandalous a behaviour."—"I care neither for you nor your school," answered the domestic youth, "it is you and not I should be ashamed of such reprobate manners, and I shall report you to my father."—"Do so," replied Gemellus, "and take that with you into the bargain."

"gain."—This was immediately seconded with a sound slap on the face with his open hand, which however drew the blood in a stream from his nostrils, and he ran screaming to Euphron, who came out upon the alarm with all the speed he could muster. Gemellus stood his ground, and after a severe caning was ordered to ask pardon of his brother; This he peremptorily refused to do, alledging that he had been punished already, and to be beaten and beg pardon too was more than he would submit to. No measures being able to bring this refractory spirit to submission, he was sent off to school penniless, and a letter was written to the master, setting forth his offence, and in strong terms censuring his want of discipline for not correcting so stubborn a temper and so idle a disposition.

When he returned to school the master sent for him to his house, and questioned him upon the matter of complaint in his father's letter, observing that the charge being for offences out of school he did not think it right to call him publicly to account; but as he believed him to be a boy of honour, he expected to hear the whole truth fairly related: This drew forth the whole narrative, and Gemellus was dismissed with a gentle admonition, that could hardly be construed into a rebuke.

When

When the next holidays were in approach, Gemellus received the following letter from his brother.

“BROTHER GEMELLUS,

“If you have duly repented of your behaviour
“to me, and will signify your contrition, asking
“pardon as becomes you for the violence you
“have committed, I will intercede with my
“father, and hope to obtain his permission for
“your coming home in the ensuing holidays:
“If not, you must take the consequences and
“remain where you are, for on this condition
“only I am to consider myself,

“Your affectionate brother,

“GEMINUS.”

To this letter Gemellus returned an answer as follows.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“I am sorry to find you still bear in mind a
“boyish quarrel so long past; be assured I have
“entirely forgiven your behaviour to me, but I
“cannot recollect any thing in mine to you,
“which I ought to ask your pardon for: What-
“ever consequences may befall me for not com-
“plying with your condition, I shall remain

“Your affectionate brother,

“GEMELLUS.”

N^o LXIII.

Naturâ tu illi pater es, consillis ego.

(TERENT.)

By nature you're his father; I by counsel.

(COLMAN.)

THIS letter fixed the fate of Gemellus: Resentments are not easily dislodged from narrow minds; Euphorion had not penetration to distinguish between the characters of his children; he saw no meanness in the sly insidious manners of his homebred favourite, nor any sparks of generous pride in the steady inflexibility of Gemellus; he little knew the high principle of honour, which even the youngest spirits communicate to each other in the habits and manners of a public school. He bitterly inveighed against his neighbour the lawyer for persuading him to such a fatal system of education, and whenever they met in company their conversation was engrossed with continual arguings and reproachings; for neither party receded from his point, and Gemellus's advocate was as little disposed to give him up, as his father was to excuse him. At last they came to a compromise, by which Euphorion agreed to charge his estate

with an annuity for the education and support of Gemellus, which annuity during his nonage was to be received and administered by the said awyer, and Geminus left heir of his whole fortune, this moderate encumbrance excepted.

The disinterested and proscribed offender was now turned over to the care of the lawyer, who regularly defrayed his school expences, and never failed to visit him at those periods, when country practitioners usually resort to town. The boy, apprized of his situation, took no further pains to assuage his father's resentment, but full of resources within himself, and possessed of an active and aspiring genius, pressed forward in his business, and soon found himself at the head of the school, with the reputation of being the best scholar in it.

He had formed a close friendship, according to the custom of great schools, with a boy of his own age, the son of a nobleman of high distinction, in whose family Gemellus was a great favourite, and where he never failed to pass his holidays, when the school adjourned. His good friend and guardian the lawyer saw the advantages of this early connection in their proper light, and readily consented to admit his ward of the same college in the university, when Gemellus and his friend had completed their school education.

education. Here the attachment of these young men became more and more solid, as they advanced nearer to manhood, and after a course of academical studies, in which Gemellus still improved the reputation he brought from Westminster, it was proposed that he should accompany his friend upon his travels, and a proper governor was engaged for that service. This proposal rather staggered Gemellus's guardian on the score of expence, and he now found it necessary for the first time to open himself to Euphorion. With this intent he called upon him one morning, and taking him aside, told him, he was come to confer with him on the subject of Gemellus—"I am sorry for it," interposed Euphorion. "Hold, Sir," answered the lawyer, "interrupt me not, if you please; tho' Gemellus is my ward, he is your son; and if you have the natural feelings of a father, you will be proud to acknowledge your right in him as such."—As he was speaking these words, an awkward servant burst into the room, and staring with fright and confusion, told his master there was a great lord in a fine equipage had actually driven up to the hall door, and was asking to speak with him. Euphorion's surprize was now little less than his servant's, and not being in the habit of receiving visits from people

of distinction, he eagerly demanded of the lawyer who this visitor could possibly be, and casting an eye of embarrassment upon his gouty foot—"I am not fit to be seen," said he, "and cannot tell how to escape; for heaven's sake! go and see who this visitor is, and keep him from the sight of me, if it be possible."

Euphorion had scarce done speaking, when the door was thrown open, and the noble stranger, who was no less a person than the father of Gemellus's friend, made his approach, and having introduced himself to Euphorion, and apologized for the abruptness of his visit, proceeded to explain the occasion of it in the following words:—"I wait upon you, Sir, with a request, in which I flatter myself I shall be seconded by this worthy gentleman here present: You have the honour to be father to one of the most amiable and accomplished young men I ever knew; it may not become me to speak so warmly of my own son as perhaps I might with truth, but I flatter myself it will be some recommendation of him to your good opinion, when I tell you that he is the friend and intimate of your Gemellus: They have now gone through school and college together, and according to my notions of the world such early connections, when they are well chosen, are
"amongst

“ amongst the chief advantages of a public education; but as I now purpose to send my son upon his travels, and in such a manner as I flatter myself will be for his benefit and improvement, I hope you will pardon this intrusion, when I inform you that the object of it is to solicit your consent that Gemellus may accompany him.”

Euphorion's countenance, whilst this speech was addressed to him, underwent a variety of changes; surprize at hearing such an unexpected character of his son was strongly express'd; a gleam of joy seemed to break out, but was soon dispell'd by shame and vexation at the reflection of having abandoned him; he attempted to speak, but confusion choked him; he cast a look of embarrassment upon the lawyer, but the joy and triumph, which his features exhibited, appeared to him like insult, and he turned his eyes on the ground in silence and despair. No one emotion had escaped the observation of Gemellus's patron, who, turning to the lawyer, said he believed he need not affect to be ignorant of Gemellus's situation, and then addressing himself again to Euphorion—"I can readily understand," said he, "that such a proposal as I have now opened to you, however advantageous it might promise to be to your son, would not correspond with

"your ideas in point of expence, nor come
 "within the compass of that limited provision,
 "which you have thought fit to appoint for him =
 "This is a matter, of which I have no preten-
 "sions to speak; you have disposed of your for-
 "tune between your sons in the proportions you
 "thought fit, and it must be owned a youth,
 "who has had a domestic education, stands the
 "most in need of a father's help, from the little
 "chance there is of his being able to take care
 "of himself: Gemellus has talents that must
 "secure his fortune, and if my services can
 "assist him, they shall never be wanting;
 "in the mean time it is very little for me
 "to say that my purse will furnish their joint
 "occasions, whilst they are on their travels, and
 "Gemellus's little fund, which is in honest
 "and friendly hands, will accumulate in the
 "interim."

The length of this speech would have given
 Euphorion time to recollect himself, if the matter
 of it had not presented some unpleasant truths to
 his reflection, which incapacitated him from
 making a deliberate reply; he made a shift how-
 ever to hammer out some broken sentences, and
 with as good a grace as he could, attempted to
 palliate his neglect of Gemellus by pleading his
 infirm state of health, and retirement from the
 world—

world—he had put him into the hands of his friend, who was present, and as he best knew what answer to give to the proposal in question, he referred his lordship to him and would abide by his decision—he was glad to hear so favourable an account of him—it was far beyond his expectations; he hoped his lordship's partiality would not be deceived in him, and he was thankful for the kind expressions he had thrown out of his future good offices and protection.—The noble visitor now desired leave to introduce his son, who was waiting in the coach, and hoped Gemellus might be allowed to pay his duty at the same time. This was a surprize upon Euphotion, which he could not parry, and the young friends were immediately ushered in by the exulting lawyer. Gemellus commanded himself with great address; but the father's look, when he first discovered an elegant and manly youth in the bloom of health and comeliness, with an open countenance, where genius, courage and philanthropy were characterized, is not to be described: It was a mixt expression of shame, conviction and repentance; nature had her share in it; parental love seemed to catch a glance, as it were, by stealth; he was silent, and his lips quivered with the supprest emotions of his heart. Gemellus approached and made an humble

obedience; Euphorion stretched forth his hand; he seized it between his, and reverently pressed it to his lips. Their meeting was not interrupted by a word, and the silence was only broken by my lord, who told Gemellus in a low voice, that his father had consented to his request, and he had no longer cause to apprehend a separation from his friend: The honest lawyer now could no longer repress his ecstacy, but running to Gemellus, who met his embrace with open arms, showered a flood of tears upon his neck, and received the tribute of gratitude and affection in return upon his own.

When their spirits were a little composed, Gemellus requested to see his brother; a summons was accordingly issued, and Geminus made his entrance. The contrast which this meeting exhibited, spoke in stronger terms than language can supply the decided preference of a public and liberal system of education, to the narrow maxims of private and domestic tuition. On Gemellus's part all was candour, openness and cordiality; he hoped all childish differences were forgiven; for his share, if he called them to remembrance, it was only to regret, that he had been so long separated from a brother, who was naturally so dear to him; for the remainder of their lives he persuaded himself they should be
twins

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twins in affection, as well as in birth. On the side of Geminus there was some acting, and some nature; but both were specimens of the worst sort; hypocrisy played his part but awkwardly, and nature gave a sorry sample of her performances.

A few words will suffice to wind up their histories, so far at least as they need be explained: Euphoriion died soon after this interview; Geminus inherited his fortune, and upon his very first coming to London was cajoled into a disgraceful marriage with a cast-off mistress, whom he became acquainted with; duped by a profligate and plundered by sharpers, he made a miserable waste both of money and reputation, and in the event became a pensioner of his brother. Gemellus with great natural talents, improved by education and experience, with an excellent nature and a laudable ambition, seconded by a very powerful connection, soon rose to a distinguished situation in the state, where he yet continues to act a conspicuous part, to the honour of his country, and with no less reputation to himself.

N° LXIV.

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.

(LUCRETIVS.)

Such cruelties religion could persuade.

(CREECH.)

I REMEMBER to have read an account in a foreign Gazette of a dreadful fire, which broke out so suddenly in a house, where a great many people were assembled, that five hundred persons perished miserably in the flames: The compiler of this account subjoins at the foot of the above melancholy article, that it is with satisfaction he can assure his readers, *all the above persons were Jews.*

These poor people seem the butt, at which all sects and persuasions level their contempt: They are sojourners and aliens in every kingdom on earth, and yet few have the hospitality to give them a welcome. I do not know any good reason why these unhappy wanderers are so treated; for they do not intrude upon the labourer or manufacturer; they do not burthen the state with their poor, and here at least they neither till the earth, nor work at any craft, but content themselves

felves in general to hawk about a few refuse manufactures, and buy up a few cast-off clothes, which no man methinks would envy them the monopoly of.

It is to the honour of our nation, that we tolerate them in the exercise of their religion, for which the Inquisition would tie them to a stake and commit them to the flames. In some parts of the world the burning of a few makes a festival for all good Christians; it brings rain and plenty in seasons of drouth and famine; it makes atonement for the sins of the people, and mitigates the wrath of an avenging Providence. Wherever they are obliged to conceal their religion, they generally overact their hypocrisy, and crowd their houses with saints and virgins, whilst crucifixes, charms and relicks are hung in numbers round their necks. The son of Jewish parents is brought up in the most rigid exercises of mortification and penance, and when the destined moment is in near approach, when the parent must impart the dreadful secret of his faith, every contrivance is put in practice to disgust and weary him with the laborious functions of their ostensible religion: When this preparatory rigour is perceived to take effect, and the age of the son is ripe for the occasion, the father takes him into the inmost chamber of his

his house, fastens all the doors, surveys every avenue with the most mysterious attention, and drawing his sword with great solemnity, throws himself on his knees at his feet, and laying open his breast, invites him to thrust the point to his heart—*For know, my son, he cries, I am a Jew, as all my fathers were: Kill me therefore on the spot, or conform to the religion of your ancestors, for you are damned as a Catholic, if, knowing what you know, you neglect to betray me!* This, as I have reason to believe, is no feigned anecdote, but a true account of those secret measures, which many Jewish families to this hour pursue for continuing the practice of their religion and securing themselves from discovery, where the consequences would be so fatal,

Having thus, by way of prelude, briefly informed my readers what these miserable people are suffering in some countries, where they are secretly settled, I shall now proceed to lay before them a letter, which I have lately received from one of that persuasion, complaining of certain indignities and vexations from the humours of our common people, which, although they are but trifles compared to what I have been describing, are nevertheless unbecoming the character of so illuminated and benevolent a nation as we have the honour to belong to.

S I R,

SIR,

I AM a man, who stick close to my business, and am married to a sober industrious woman, whom I should be glad now and then to treat with a play, which is the only public amusement she has ever expressed a wish to be indulged in; but I am really under such difficulties, that I dare not carry her thither, and at the same time do not like to discover my reasons for it, as I should be sorry to give her a dislike to the country she is in.

You must know, Sir, I am a Jew, and probably have that national cast of countenance, which a people so separate and unmixed may well be supposed to have: The consequence of this is, that I no sooner enter a playhouse, than I find all eyes turned upon me; if this were the worst, I would strive to put as good a face upon it as I could; but this is sure to be followed up with a thousand scurrilities, which I should blush to repeat, and which I cannot think of subjecting my wife to hear.

As I should really take great pleasure in a good play, if I might be permitted to sit it out in peace, I have tried every part of the house, but the front boxes, where I observe such a line of bullies in the back, that even if I were a

Christian

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Christian I would not venture amongst them ; but I no sooner put my head into an obscure corner of the gallery, than some fellow or other roars out to his comrades—*Smoke the Jew !—Smoke the cunning little Isaac !—Throw him over,* says another, *hand over the smutch !—Out with Shylock,* cries a third, *out with the pound of man's flesh !—Buckles and buttons ! Spectacles !* bawls out a fourth—and so on through the whole gallery, till I am forced to retire out of the theatre, amongst hootings and hissings, with a shower of rotten apples and chewed oranges vollied at my head, when all the offence I have given is an humble offer to be a peaceable spectator, jointly with them, of the same common amusement.

I hope I shall not incur your displeasure if I venture to say this is not very manly treatment in a great and generous people, which I always took the English to be ; I have lodged my property, which is not inconsiderable, in this country, and having no abiding-place on this earth, which I could call my own, I have made England my choice, thinking it the safest asylum that a wanderer and an alien could fly to ; I hope I have not been mistaken in my opinion of it : It has frequently fallen in my way to shew some kindnesses to your countrymen in foreign parts, and some are yet living, who, if they would speak

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ſpeak the truth, muſt confeſs that their beſt friend in life is a Jew: But of theſe things I ſcorn to boaſt; however, Sir, I muſt own it gave me ſome pain the other night to find myſelf very roughly handled by a ſeafaring fellow, whom I remembered well enough in a moſt piteous condition at Algiers, where I had the good will to relieve him and ſet him at liberty with my own money: I hope he did not recollect me; I ſay I hope not for the honour of human nature, but I am much afraid he did: This I am ſure would be called ingratitude even in a Heathen.

I obſerve with much concern that your great writers of plays take delight in hanging us out to public ridicule and contempt on all occaſions: If ever they are in ſearch of a rogue, an uſurer or a buffoon, they are ſure to make a Jew ſerve the turn: I verily believe the odious character of Shylock has brought little leſs perfection upon us poor ſcattered ſons of Abraham, than the Inquiſition itſelf. As I am intereſted to know if this blood-thirſty villain really exiſted in nature, and have no means to ſatisfy my curioſity but your favour, I take the liberty humbly to requeſt that you will tell me how the caſe truly ſtands, and whether we muſt of neceſſity own this Shylock; alſo I ſhould be glad to know of which tribe this fellow was, for if ſuch a
1
monster

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monster did exist, I have strong suspicion he will turn out a Samaritan. As I cannot doubt but a gentleman of your great learning knows all these things correctly, I shall wait your answer with the most anxious impatience; and pray be particular as to the tribe of Judah, for if nothing less than half my fortune could oust him there, I would pay it down to be rid of such a rascal.

Your compliance with the above will be the greatest obligation you can confer upon, Sir,

Your most devoted

humble servant,

ABRAHAM ABRAHAMS.

P. S. I hope I shall not give offence by adding a postscript, to say, that if you could persuade one of the gentlemen or ladies, who write plays (with all of whom I conclude you have great interest) to give us poor Jews a kind lift in a new comedy, I am bold to promise we should not prove ungrateful on a third night.

A. A.

If I had really that interest with my ingenious contemporaries, which *Mr. Abrahams* gives me credit for, I would not hesitate to exert it in his service; but as I am afraid this is not the case,

I have

I have taken the only method in my power of being useful to him, and have published his letter.

As for Shylock, who is so obnoxious to my correspondent, I wish I could prove him the son of a Samaritan as clearly as Simon Magus; but I flatter myself the next best thing for his purpose is to prove him the son of a poet, and that I will endeavour to do in my very next paper, with this further satisfaction to *Mr. Abrabams*, that I do not despair of taking him down a step in his pedigree, which for a poetical one is, as it now stands, of the very first family in the kingdom.

As for the vulgar fun of *smoking a Jew*, which so prevails amongst us, I am persuaded that my countrymen are much too generous and good-natured to sport with the feelings of a fellow-creature, if they were once fairly convinced that a Jew is their fellow-creature, and really has fellow-feelings with their own: Satisfy them in this point, and their humanity will do the rest: I will therefore hope that nothing more is wanting in behalf of my correspondent, (who seems a very worthy man) than to put the following short questions to his persecutors—*Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with*

*the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same summer and winter, as a Christian is? If you prick them, do they not bleed? If you tickle them, do they not laugh? If you poison them, do they not die?—The man, who can give a serious answer to these questions, and yet persist in persecuting an unoffending being, because he is a Jew, whatever country he may claim, or whatever religion he may profess, has the soul of an inquisitor, and is fit for nothing else but to feed the fires of an *Auto da Fé*.*

When I turn my thoughts to the past and present situation of this peculiar people, I do not see how any Christian nation according to the spirit of their religion can refuse admission to the Jews, who, in completion of those very prophecies, on which Christianity rests, are to be scattered and disseminated amongst all people and nations over the face of the earth. It seems therefore a thing as inconsistent with the spirit of those prophecies for any one nation to attempt to expel them, as it would be to incorporate them.

The sin and obduracy of their forefathers are amongst the undoubted records of our gospel, but I doubt if this can be a sufficient reason,
why

why we should hold them in such general odium through so many ages, seeing how naturally the son follows the faith of the father, and how much too general a thing it is amongst mankind to profess any particular form of religion, that devolves upon them by inheritance, rather than by free election and conviction of reason founded upon examination:

Let me put the case of a man born a Jew and settled in a kingdom, where the Inquisition is in force; can he reconcile his natural feelings to a conversion in favour of that church, which denounces everlasting damnation against him, if he does not betray the secrets of his parents, and impeach them to the Inquisition for the concealed religion, which he knows they practise, though they do not profess.

If we as Christians owe some respect to the Jews as the people chosen by God to be the keepers of those prophetic records, which announce the coming of the Messias, we owe it also to the truth of history to confess, that the hope indulged by them that his coming would bring temporal as well as spiritual salvation, was general to all the nation. Their antient sages had united the military with the prophetic character; some had headed their armies; all had gone forth with them, and even their women

had contributed to the downfall of their enemies and oppressors : They had been delivered from their Egyptian and Babylonish thralldom by the arm of God ; the yoke of Rome laid no less heavy on their necks ; and they regarded their former deliverances as types and forerunners of the greater deliverance to come, when the Son of God should descend upon earth in the plenitude of his power to rid them from their enemies and oppressors.

In place of this glittering but delusive vision they beheld a meek and humble man, a teacher of peaceful doctrines, who went about preaching forgiveness of injuries and submission to authorities. They asked him (and the question was a proving one) whether he would have them render tribute unto Cæsar : He told them in reply they should render unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, tribute to whom tribute was due : Mortifying reply ! extinguishing at once their hopes and their ambition. Still there was something about him that converted many and staggered all ; never man spoke as he spoke, never man did what he did ; he had evident power of working miracles ; the hand of God was with him and the operations of nature were under his controul : His power was great, but was not great to their purposes, and therefore they denied that
it

it was derived from God ; they charged him with being a magician, and casting out devils by the aid of the prince of the devils : A likely intercourse between the representatives of light and of darkness ; a notable collusion between heaven and hell ; if Beelzebub was to be charged with conspiring to cast out Beelzebub, it was at least incumbent on the abettors of the charge to prove that any being, endowed with such power could be so devoid of intelligence.

Conviction and rebuke only rendered them more furious and inveterate ; despairing at length of employing his power against Rome, they resolved upon turning the power of Rome against him : They impeached him before Pilate the Roman procurator ; Pilate unwillingly at their urgent requisition sentenced him to ignominious execution ; disavowing in the strongest terms his share in the act, and by the figurative exculpation of washing his hands in public view, purifying, (as far as such a ceremony could purify) his tribunal from the guilt of spilling innocent blood.

Can it be a wonder with us at this hour that the Jews should persist in avowing their unbelief in the Messias ? If they admit the evidences of the Christian religion, do they not become their own accusers ? And this, although it be no rea-

son why a man should shut his eyes against the truth, will yet be a motive, allowing for the imperfection of human nature, why he should not seek for it.

N° LXV.

I SLIGHTLY hinted in my former paper that the Jew of Venice would not turn out to be the proper offspring of Shakespear, and as the researches of his commentators have settled this point so clearly against the legitimacy of Shylock, I may leave it with the reader's judgment to decide, whether he formed his drama immediately from the *Pecorone* of *Fiorentina*, borrowing the incident of the caskets from Boccace; or at second hand, as some suppose, from an old ballad formed upon that story.

But I had a further object in the hint I then dropt, suggested to me by the perusal of a very curious old novel written by *Thomas Nashe*, and published in 1594, intitled *The Unfortunate Traveller, or the Life of Jacke Wilton*. The hero is described to be one of the court-pages belonging to Henry the Eighth, and is made to play a number of roguish pranks in the camp of that monarch

monarch before Tournay. He travels to Munster in Germany, where he falls in with John of Leyden the famous fanatic, and is present at his defeat by the Imperialists; here he meets Lord Henry Howard, Earl of Surry, and accompanies him to Venice, passing through Wittenberg, where he has an interview with Luther and Carlostadius; from thence he repairs to Rome, where he relates a series of strange adventures, by which he is thrown into the hands of a Jew named Zadock, physician to Pope Clement VIII. and having forfeited his life to him by the law, the Jew gets the person of Jack Wilton in limbo with an intent to anatomize him, and whilst he is dieting and bleeding him for that purpose, the Marchioness of Mantua, the Pope's mistress, spies him out from her balcony, and being smitten with his appearance, contrives to get him out of Zadock's hands, by persuading his holiness to banish all the Jews from Rome and confiscate their effects, upon a charge she sets up against them.

With this intelligence Zadock is accosted by a brother Jew called Zachary, "who comes running to him in sackcloth and ashes, presently after his goods were confiscated, and tells him how he is served and what decree is coming out against them all."

I have made an extract of this interview between Zadock and Zachary, which the reader will observe by the date was published before Shakespear wrote his Merchant of Venice, and as the critics seem agreed that he was conversant in other works of Nashe, it is highly probable that this history of *Jacke Wilton* had also been in his hands: I do not mean to infer that Shakespear took his character of Shylock from this of Nashe's Zadock, for there is nothing that can warrant such an inference; but I shall submit the following dialogue as an extraordinary specimen of strong empassioned writing, which, though it will not stand by Shakespear's scene between Shylock and Tubal in dramatic terseness, has nevertheless a force of expression, that will bear a comparison with that or any other passage in our old dramatic writers.

Zachary having made his report as above, the author thus proceeds to the introduction of his chief speaker—"Descriptions stand by! here is
 "to be expressed the fury of Lucifer, when he
 "was turned over heaven's bar for a wrangler:
 "There is a toad-fish, which taken out of the
 "water swells more than one would think his
 "skin could hold, and bursts in his face that
 "touches him; so swelled Zadock, and was
 "ready to burst out of his skin, and shoot his
 "bowels

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“bowels like chain-shot full in Zachary’s face,
 “for bringing him such baleful tidings; his eyes
 “glared and burned blue like brimstone and aqua
 “vitæ set on fire in an egg-shell; his very nose
 “lightened glow-worms; his teeth cracked and
 “grated together like the joints of a high build-
 “ing rocking like a cradle, when as a tempest
 “takes her full-butt against her broadside: He
 “swore and curst, and said—

“These be they that worship that crucified
 “God of Nazareth; here is the fruits of their
 “new-found gospel; sulphur and gunpowder
 “carry them all quick to Gehennah! I would
 “spend my soul willingly to have this triple-
 “headed Pope, with all his sin-absolved whores,
 “and oil-greased priests, born like a black saint
 “on the devil’s backes in procession to the pit
 “of perdition. Would I might sink presently
 “into the earth, so I might blow up this Rome,
 “this whore of Babylon into the air with my
 “breath! If I must be banished, if these heathen
 “dogs will needs rob me of my goods, I will
 “poison their springs and conduit-heads, whence
 “they receive their water all about the city.
 “I will ’tice all the young children into my
 “house, that I can get, and cutting their throats,
 “barrel them up in powdering beef tubs, and so
 “send them to victual the Pope’s gallies. Ere
 “the

“ the officers come to extend, I will bestow an
 “ hundred pounds on a dole of bread, which I
 “ will cause to be kneaded with scorpion’s oil,
 “ that may kill more than the plague. I will
 “ hire them that make their wafers, or sacra-
 “ mentary Gods, to mix them after the same
 “ sort, so in the zeal of their superstitious re-
 “ ligion shall they languish and drop like car-
 “ rion. If there be ever a blasphemous con-
 “ jurer, that can call the winds from their bra-
 “ zen caves, and make the clouds travel before
 “ their time, I will give him the other hundred
 “ pounds to disturb the heavens a whole week
 “ together with thunder and lightning, if it be
 “ for nothing but to fower all the wines in
 “ Rome, and turn them to vinegar : As long as
 “ they have either oil or wine, this plague feeds
 “ but pinchingly upon them.’

“ Zadock, Zadock,’ said Zachary, cutting
 “ him off, ‘ thou threatenest the air, whilst we
 “ perish here on earth : It is the countess Juli-
 “ ana, the Marquis of Mantua’s wife, and no
 “ other, that hath complotted our confusion ;
 “ ask not how, but insist on my words, and assist
 “ in revenge.’

“ As how, as how ?” said Zadock, shrugging
 “ and shrubbing ; ‘ More happy than the patri-
 “ archs were I, if crucft to death with the
 “ greatest

“greatest torments Rome’s tyrants have used,
 “there might be quintessenced out of me one
 “quart of precious poison. I have a leg with
 “an issue, shall I cut it off, and from this fount
 “of corruption extract a venom worse than any
 “serpent’s? If thou wilt, I will go to a house
 “that is infected, where catching the plague,
 “and having got a running sore upon me, I
 “will come and deliver her a supplication, and
 “breathe upon her, when I am perfected with
 “more putrefaction.”

Zadock in conclusion is taken up and executed, and the description of his tortures is terrible in the extreme; every circumstance attending them is minutely delineated in colours full as strong as the above.

I persuade myself the reader will not be displeased, if I lay before him one extract more, in which he ridicules the affected dress and manners of the travelled gentlemen of his day: If we contemplate it as a painting of two hundred years standing, I think it must be allowed to be a very curious sketch.

“What is there in France to be learned
 “more than in England, but falsehood in friend-
 “ship, perfect slovenry and to love no man, but
 “for my pleasure? I have known some that have
 “continued there by the space of half a dozen
 “years,

“ years, and when they come home, they have
 “ hid a little weerish lean face under a broad
 “ French hat, kept a terrible coil with the dust
 “ in the street in their long cloaks of grey paper,
 “ and spoken English strangely. Nought else
 “ have they profited by their travel, but to
 “ distinguish the true Bourdeaux grape, and
 “ know a cup of neat Gascoigne wine from
 “ wine of Orleans; yea and peradventure this
 “ also, to esteem of the p—x as a pimple, to
 “ wear a velvet patch on their face, and walk
 “ melancholy with their arms folded.

“ From Spain what bringeth our traveller?
 “ A scull-crowned hat of the fashion of an old
 “ deep porringer; a diminutive alderman’s ruff
 “ with short strings, like the droppings of a
 “ man’s nose; a close-bellied doublet coming
 “ down with a peake behind as far as the crup-
 “ per, and cut off before by the breast-bone like
 “ a partlet or neckercher; a wide pair of gas-
 “ coynes, which ungathered would make a cou-
 “ ple of women’s riding-kirtles; huge hangers,
 “ that have half a cow-hide in them; a rapier
 “ that is lineally descended from half a dozen
 “ dukes at the least: Let his cloak be as long
 “ or as short as you will; if long, it is faced
 “ with Turkey grogeran ravelled; if short, it
 “ hath a cape like a calf’s tongue, and is not so
 “ deep

" deep in his whole length, nor so much cloth
 " in it I will justify as only the standing cape of
 " a Dutchman's cloak. I have not yet touched
 " all, for he hath in either shoe as much taffaty
 " for his tyings, as would serve for an ancient;
 " which serveth him (if you would have the
 " mystery of it) of the own accord for a shoe-
 " rag. If you talk with him, he makes a dis-
 " cloth of his own country in comparison of
 " Spain; but if you urge him particularly where-
 " in it exceeds, he can give no instance, but in
 " Spain they have better bread than any we
 " have; when (poor hungry slaves!) they may
 " crumble it into water well enough and make
 " misons with it, for they have not a good mor-
 " sel of meat, except it be salt pilchers, to eat
 " with it, all the year long; and, which is more,
 " they are poor beggars, and lie in foul straw
 " every night.

" Italy, the paradise of the earth, and the epi-
 " cure's heaven, how doth it form our young
 " master? It makes him to kiss his hand like an
 " ape, cringe his neck like a starveling, and play
 " at *Hey-pafs-repafs-come-aloft*, when he salutes a
 " man: From thence he brings the art of athe-
 " ism, the art of epicurizing, the art of whoring,
 " the art of poisoning, the art of sodomitry:
 " The only probable good thing they have to
 " keep

“ keep us from utterly condemning it, is, that
 “ it maketh a man an excellent courtier, a curi-
 “ ous carpet-knight ; which is by interpretation
 “ a fine close lecher, a glorious hypocrite : It is
 “ now a privy note amongst the better sort of
 “ men, when they would set a singular mark or
 “ brand on a notorious villain, to say he hath
 “ been in Italy.”

I hope I need not observe that these descriptions are not here quoted for the truth they contain, but for the curiosity of them. Thomas Nashe was the bitterest satirist and controversialist of the age he lived in.

N° LXVI.

I WAS some nights ago much entertained with an excellent representation of Mr. Congreve's comedy of *The Double Dealer*. When I reflected upon the youth of the author and the merit of the play, I acknowledged the truth of what the late Dr. Samuel Johnson says in his life of this poet, that *amongst all the efforts of early genius, which literary history records, I doubt whether any one can be produced that more surpasses*

I

passes the common limits of nature than the plays of Congreve.

The author of this comedy in his dedication informs us, that he *designed the moral first, and to that moral invented the fable*; and does not know that he has borrowed one hint of it any where.—*I made the plot*, says he, *as strong as I could; because it was single; and I made it single because I would avoid confusion, and was resolved to preserve the three unities of the drama.* As it is impossible not to give full credit to this assertion, I must consider the resemblance which many circumstances in *The Double Dealer* bear to those in a comedy of Beaumont and Fletcher, intitled *Cupid's Revenge*, as a casual coincidence; and I think the learned biographer above quoted had good reason to pronounce of Congreve, *that he is an original writer, who borrowed neither the models of his plot, nor the manner of his dialogue.*

Mellafont, the nephew and heir of Lord Touchwood, being engaged to Cynthia, daughter of Sir Paul Pliant, the traversing this match forms the object of the plot, on which this comedy of *The Double Dealer* is constructed; the intrigue consists in the various artifices employed by Lady Touchwood and her agents for that purpose.

That

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That the object is (as the author himself states it to be) *singly* this, will appear upon considering, that, although the ruin of Mellafont's fortune is for a time effected by these contrivances, that are employed for traversing his marriage, yet it is rather a measure of necessity and self-defence in Lady Touchwood, than of original design; it springs from the artifice of incident, and belongs more properly to the intrigue, than to the object of the plot.

The making or obstructing marriages is the common hinge, on which most comic fables are contrived to turn, but in this match of Mellafont's, which the author has taken for the ground-work of his plot, I must observe that it would have been better to have given more interest to an event, which he has made the main object of the play: He has taken little pains to recommend the parties to his spectators, or to paint their mutual attachment with any warmth of colouring. Who will feel any concern whether Mellafont marries Cynthia or not, if they themselves appear indifferent on the occasion, and upon the eve of their nuptials converse in the following strain?

Mel.

Mel. You seem thoughtful, Cynthia.

Cyn. I am thinking, tho' marriage makes man and wife one flesh, it leaves them still two fools, and they become more conspicuous by setting off one another.

Mel. That's only when two fools meet, and their follies are opposed.

Cyn. Nay, I have known two wits meet, and by the opposition of their wit, render themselves as ridiculous as fools. 'Tis an odd game we are going to play at; what think you of drawing stakes, and giving over in time?

Mel. No, hang it, that's not endeavouring to win, because it is possible we may lose—&c. &c.

This scene, which proceeds throughout in the same strain, seems to confirm Dr. Johnson's remark, that Congreve formed a peculiar idea of comic excellence, which he supposed to consist in gay remarks and unexpected answers—that his scenes exhibit not much of humour, imagery or passion; his personages are a kind of intellectual gladiators; every sentence is to ward or strike; the contest of smartness is never intermitted; and his wit is a meteor playing to and fro with alternate coruscations.

There is but one more interview between Cynthia and Mellafont, which is the opening of the fourth act, and this is of so flat and insipid a sort, as to be with reason omitted in representation: I think therefore it may be justly ob-

served, that this match, for the prevention of which artifices of so virulent and diabolical a nature are practised by Lady Touchwood and *The Double Dealer*, is not pressed upon the feelings of the spectators in so interesting a manner, as it should and might have been.

Having remarked upon the object of the plot, I shall next consider the intrigue; and for this purpose we must methodically trace the conduct of Lady Touchwood, who is the poet's chief engine, and that of her under-agent Maskwell.

The scene lies in Lord Touchwood's house, but whether in town or country does not appear. Sir Paul Pliant, his lady and daughter, are naturally brought thither, upon the day preceding Cynthia's marriage, to adjust the settlement: Lord and Lady Froth, Careless and Brisk, are visitors on the occasion; Mellafont and Maskwell are inmates: This disposition is as happy as can be devised. The incident related by Mellafont to Careless, of the attempt upon him made by Lady Touchwood, artfully prepares us to expect every thing that revenge and passion can suggest for frustrating his happiness; and it is judicious to represent Mellafont incredulous as to the criminality of Maskwell's intercourse with Lady Touchwood; for if he had believed it upon Careless's suggestion, it would have made his blindness

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blindness to the character of Maskwell not only weak, (which in fact it is) but unnatural and even guilty.

Maskwell in the first act makes general promises to Lady Touchwood that he will defeat Mellafont's match—*You shall possess and ruin him too*.—The lady presses him to explain particulars; he opens no other resource but that of possessing Lady Pliant with an idea that Mellafont is fond of her—*She must be thoroughly persuaded that Mellafont loves her*.—So shallow a contrivance as this cannot escape the lady's penetration, and she naturally answers—*I don't see what you can propose from so trifling a design; for her first conversing with Mellafont will convince her of the contrary*.—In fact, the author's good sense was well aware how weak this expedient is, and it seems applied to no other purpose than as an incident to help on the under-plot, by bringing forward the comic effect of Lady Pliant's character, and that of Sir Paul: Maskwell himself is so fairly gravelled by the observation, that he confesses he *does not depend upon it*; but he observes that *it will prepare something else, and gain him leisure to lay a stronger plot*; if I gain a little time, says he, *I shall not want contrivance*.

In the second act this design upon Lady Pliant is played off, and Maskwell in an interview with Mellafont avows the plot, and says—*to tell you the truth, I encouraged it for your diversion.* He proceeds to say, that in order to gain the confidence of Lady Touchwood, *he had pretended to have been long secretly in love with Cynthia ; that thereby he had drawn forth the secrets of her heart, and that if he accomplished her designs, she had engaged to put Cynthia with all her fortune into his power :* He then discloses by soliloquy that his motive for *double dealing* was founded in his passion for Cynthia, and observes that *the name of rival cuts all ties asunder and is a general acquittance.* This proceeding is in nature and is good comedy.

The third act opens with a scene between Lord and Lady Touchwood, which is admirably conceived and executed with great spirit ; I question if there is any thing of the author superior to this dialogue. The design of alarming the jealousy and resentment of Lord Touchwood now appears to have originated with the lady, although Maskwell was privy to it, and *ready for a cue to come in and confirm all, had there been occasion ;* he proposes to her to say that he was privy to Mellafont's design, *but that he used his utmost endeavours to dissuade him from it ;* and on the credit, he thinks to

establish

establish by this proof of his honour and honesty, he grounds another plot, which he keeps as his ultimate and most secret resource, that *of cheating her* [Lady Touchwood] *as well as the rest.* He now reveals to Mellafont a criminal assignation with Lady Touchwood in her chamber at eight, and proposes to him to come and surprize them together, and then, says he, *it will be hard if you cannot bring her to any conditions.*

This appears to me to be a very dangerous experiment, and scarce within the bounds of nature and probability. If Maskwell, under cover of the proposal, had in view nothing more than the introduction of Mellafont into Lady Touchwood's bedchamber, there to put them together, and then to bring Lord Touchwood secretly upon them in the moment of their interview, his contrivance could not have been better laid for the purpose of confirming the impression, which that lord had received against his nephew; in which Maskwell had nothing more to do than to apprise the lady of his design, and she of course could have managed the interview to the purposes of the plot, and effectually have completed the ruin of Mellafont: This, it should seem, would have answered his object completely, for he would have risen upon the ruin of Mellafont, possessed himself of Lord Touchwood's

favour, bound Lady Touchwood to concealment of his villainy, and been as able to lay his train for the possession of Cynthia, as by any other mode he could chuse for obtaining her; but if he put it to the issue of a surprize upon Lady Touchwood, when she was not prepared for the management of that surprize, what was he to expect from the introduction of Lord Touchwood, but discovery and defeat? Was it not natural to suppose Mellafont would seize the opportunity of reproaching her with her criminality with Maskwell? It was for that very purpose he brings him thither; he tells him *it will be hard if he cannot then bring her to any conditions*;—and if this was to pass under the terror of his reproaches, how could Maskwell set Lord Touchwood upon listening to their conversation and not apprehend for a consequence apparently so unavoidable? He puts every thing to risque by proposing to Mellafont to conceal himself in Lady Touchwood's bedchamber, whilst she is in the closet; he then meets Lord Touchwood, appoints him to come to the lobby by the bedchamber in a quarter of an hour's time; he keeps his assignation with the lady, Mellafont starts from his hiding-place, and Maskwell escapes, but soon returns, secretly introducing Lord Touchwood to listen to the dialogue between

tween his lady and nephew: She accidentally discovers him without his being seen by Mellafont, and turns that accidental discovery against Mellafont. What a combination of improbabilities is here fortuitously thrown together to produce this lucky incident! Could Maskwell reasonably presume upon a chance so beyond expectation? Every thing is made to turn upon the precarious point of a minute: If Lord Touchwood, who was appointed for a quarter of an hour, had anticipated that appointment, if Lady Touchwood had been less punctual to her assignment, if Mellafont had happened to have dropt one word in his uncle's hearing, charging her with his discovery, as had been agreed, or if either she had happened not to have seen Lord Touchwood, or Mellafont had seen him; in short, if any one thing had turned up, which ought to have come to pass, or otherwise than it was made to come to pass by the greatest violence to probability, Maskwell was inevitably undone: It must be owned he laid a train for his own destruction, but stage incident rescued him; and this, with the lady's adroitness, effaces the improbability, when it passes in representation, and keeps nature out of sight. Had Mellafont told the plain story to his uncle, after Lady Touchwood had so unexpectedly turned it

against him, it would at least have put the plot to risque, and of this the author seems so conscious, that he does not suffer him to attempt a single word in his defence; to save his villain, he is compelled to sacrifice his hero.

It is not sufficient to say that a poet has his characters in his power, and can fashion incidents according to his own discretion; he must do no violence to nature and probability for the purposes of his plot.

Maskwell having in this manner escaped with success, begins next to put in execution his plot for obtaining Cynthia, and this constitutes the intrigue and catastrophe of the fifth act: His plan is as follows—Having imparted to Lord Touchwood his love for Cynthia by the vehicle of a soliloquy, which is to be overheard by his lordship, he proposes to himself to carry off Cynthia to St. Albans with the chaplain in the coach, there to be married; this she is to be trepanned into by persuading her that the chaplain is Mellafont, and Mellafont is brought to co-operate, by a promise that he shall elope with Cynthia under that disguise, and that the chaplain shall be made to follow on the day after and then marry him to Cynthia; with this view Mellafont is appointed to meet Maskwell in one chamber, and Cynthia in another; the real chaplain

lain is to be passed upon the lady for Mellafont, and Mellafont is to be left in the lurch; this plot upon Cynthia Maskwell confides to Lord Touchwood, telling him there is no other way to possess himself of her but by surprize.

Though the author undoubtedly meant his villain should in the end outwit himself, yet he did not mean him to attempt impossibilities, and the absurdities of this contrivance are so many, that I know not which to mention first. How was Maskwell to possess himself of Cynthia by this scheme? By what force or fraud is he to accomplish the object of marrying her? We must conclude he was not quite so desperate as to sacrifice all his hopes from Lord Touchwood by any violence upon her person; there is nothing in his character to warrant the conjecture. It is no less unaccountable how Mellafont could be caught by this project, and induced to equip himself in the chaplain's gown to run off with a lady, who had pledged herself to him never to marry any other man: There was no want of consent on her part; a reconciliation with Lord Touchwood was the only object he had to look to, and how was that to be effected by this elopement with Cynthia?

The jealousy of Lady Touchwood was another rock on which Maskwell was sure to split: It would

would have been natural for him to have provided against this danger by binding my lord to secrecy, and the lady's pride of family was a ready plea for that purpose; when he was talking to himself for the purpose of being overheard by Lord Touchwood, he had nothing to do but to throw in this observation amongst the rest to bar that point against discovery.

The reader will not suppose I would suggest a plan of operation for *The Double Dealer* to secure him against discovery; I am only for adding probability and common precaution to his projects: I allow that it is in character for him to grow wanton with success; there is a moral in a villain outwitting himself; but the catastrophe would in my opinion have been far more brilliant, if his schemes had broke up with more force of contrivance; laid as they are, they melt away and dissolve by their own weakness and inconsistency; Lord and Lady Touchwood, Careless and Cynthia, all join in the discovery; every one but Mellafont sees through the plot, and he is blindness itself.

Mr. Congreve, in his dedication above mentioned, defends himself against the objection to soliloquies; but I conceive he is more open to criticism for the frequent use he makes of list-
ing;

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ing ; Lord Touchwood three times has recourse to this expedient.

Of the characters in this comedy Lady Touchwood, though of an unfavourable cast, seems to have been the chief care of the poet, and is well preserved throughout ; her elevation of tone, nearly approaching to the tragic, affords a strong relief to the lighter sketches of the episodical persons, Sir Paul and Lady Pliant, Lord and Lady Froth, who are highly entertaining, but much more loose than the stage in its present state of reformation would endure : Nothing more can be said of Careless and Brisk, than that they are the young men of the theatre, at the time when they were in representation. Of Maskwell enough has been said in these remarks, nor need any thing be added to what has been already observed upon Mellafont and Cynthia. As for the moral of the play, which the author says he designed in the first place and then applied the fable to it, it should seem to have been his principal object in the formation of the comedy, and yet it is not made to reach several characters of very libertine principles, who are left to reform themselves at leisure ; and the plot, though subordinate to the moral, seems to have drawn him off from executing his good intentions

tions so compleatly as those professions may be understood to engage for.

N° LXVII.

Ulcera animi sananda magis quam corporis.

(EX SENTENT.)

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd?

(MACBETH.)

IT seems as if most of the antient writers of history thought no events worth recording to posterity but accounts of battles and sieges and the overthrow of empires; as if men were to be celebrated only in proportion to the devastation they had made of the human species. As my respect, on the contrary, is directed chiefly to those peaceable characters, who have been the benefactors of mankind, it is with pleasure I discovered an anecdote of an antient king of Egypt of this description, named *Osymanduas*: This good prince, amongst other praise-worthy actions, has the credit of making the first public library in that learned nation, before books were collected at Athens by Pisistratus: *Osymanduas* made no scruple

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scruple to convert one of the chief temples to this generous use, and gave it in charge to the priests belonging to it to digest and arrange his collection; when this was done, he laid it open to the public, and by a very apposite and ingenious device, which he caused to be inscribed upon the front of the edifice, invited all his subjects to enter in and partake of his benefaction: He considered it as the duty of a good king to provide against the mental as well as bodily ailments of his people; it appeared to him that books were the best medicines for the mind of man, and consequently that a collection of books, such as his library contained, might well be intitled *a magazine or warehouse of medicines for the mind*; with this idea he directed the following words to be engraved over the door of his library in conspicuous characters—*Ψυχῆς ἰατρεῖον*. There is a beautiful simplicity in the thought, which seems to give an insight into the benevolent design of the donor; and as I hold it a more noble office to preserve the mind in health, than to keep the body after death from corruption, I cannot hesitate to give *Osymanduas* more credit for this benefaction of a library, than if he had been founder of the pyramids.

As the distempers of the mind may be figuratively classed under the several characters of those maladies,

maladies, which are incidental to the body, so the several descriptions of books may very well be sorted into the various *genera* of medicines, which practice has applied to those respective distempers. A library, thus pharmaceutically disposed, would have the appearance of a dispensatory, and might be properly enough so called; and when I recollect how many of our eminent collectors of books have been of the medical faculty, I cannot but think it probable that those great benefactors to literature, Rattcliffe, Mead, Sloane, Hunter and others have had this very idea of *Opjmanduas* in their minds, when they founded their libraries. If therefore it should be thought agreeable to the will of the donors, and a proper mark of respect to their memories, so to arrange their collections, now in the repositories of Oxford and the British Museum, it will be necessary to find out a different set of titles, and instead of sorting them as they now are into the compartments of *The Historians*; *The Poets*; *The Divines*, it will be right to set up new inscriptions in their places, and intitle them, *The Alteratives*; *The Stimulatives*; *The Narcotics*. I need not point out to the learned keepers of these libraries how to proceed in an arrangement, to which their own judgments are so fully competent; nothing more

more will be required of them, but to ascertain the particular species of disease, which the mind of the patient is affected with, and send him forthwith to the proper class of authors for his cure.

For instance; if the complaint arises from cold humours and a want of free perspiration by a stoppage and constipation of the pores of the mind, by which the feelings are rendered inert, and deprived of that proper emanation and expansion, which the health of the soul requires; let such an one be shut into the warm bath of *the Sudorifics*, which I need not explain to be *the Satyrists*, and they will soon open his pores and disperse all obstructions. If the mental disease be of the inflammatory and feverish sort, attended with fits and paroxysms of anger, envy, revenge, and other atrabilious symptoms, which cannot be mistaken, it will be proper to turn the patient into the cell of the *Moralists*, who will naturally be found under the title of *The Coolers and Sedatives*: On the contrary, where the complaint is of the lethargic nature, in which *Irritation* is necessary, the *Controversialists* will furnish him a remedy: In short, we need only say, that when the several authors are properly arranged, every case may find its cure. The comic writers will act as *Carminatives* to
dispel

dispel the vapours ; books of travels as *Cathartics* to procure a motion ; memoirs and novels will operate as *Provocatives*, politics as *Corrosives*, and panegyrics as *Emetics*. Two compartments should be kept apart and specially distinguished, viz. the sacred writings under the title of *Restoratives*, and the works of the infidels under the denominations of *deadly Poisons* : The former will be sovereign in all galloping consumptions of dissipation, and the latter will be resorted to by none but suicides and desperadoes.

I should now dismiss the subject, but that I had forgotten to speak of the *Efferyists*, who from their miscellaneous properties certainly come under the class of *Compounds*, and cannot therefore be so precisely specified ; as they are applicable to chronic diseases rather than acute ones, they may very well stand in the list of *Correctors*, which taken in a regular course and under proper regimen are found very efficacious in all cases, where the constitution is impaired by excess and bad habits of living : They seem most to resemble those medicinal springs, which are impregnated with a variety of properties, and, when critically analyzed, are found to contain salt, nitre, steel, sulphur, chalk and other calcareous particles : When the more respectable

able names of *Bath, Spa, Pyrmont, Seltzer*, and others, are disposed of, I am not without hopes these humbler essays, which my candid readers are now in the course of taking, may be found to have the wholesome properties of *Tunbridge Waters*.

It is supposed that this library of the venerable *Ofymanduas* descended to the Ptolemies, augmented probably by the intermediate monarchs, and ultimately brought to perfection by the learned and munificent *Philadelphus*, son of *Ptolemy Lagus*, so well known for his Greek translation of the Hebrew Septuagint.

Little attention was paid to literature by the Romans in the early and more martial ages : I read of no collections antecedent to those made by *Æmilius Paulus* and *Lucullus*, the latter of whom, being a man of great magnificence, allowed the learned men of his time to have free access to his library, but neither in his life time, nor at his death, made it public property. *Cornelius Sylla* before his dictatorship plundered Athens of a great collection of books, which had been accumulating from the time of the tyranny, and these he brought to Rome, but did not build or endow any library for public use. This was at last undertaken by *Julius Cæsar* upon an imperial scale not long

before his death, and the learned M. Varro was employed to collect and arrange the books for the foundation of an ample library; its completion, which was interrupted by the death of Julius and the civil wars subsequent thereto, was left for Augustus, who assigned a fund out of the Dalmatian booty for this purpose, which he put into the hands of the celebrated Asinius Pollio, who therewith founded a temple to Liberty on Mount Aventine, and with the help of Sylla's and Varro's collections in addition to his own purchases, opened the first public library in Rome in an apartment annexed to the temple above mentioned. Two others were afterwards instituted by the same emperor, which he called the *Octavian* and *Palatine Libraries*; the first, so named in honour of his sister, was placed in the temple of Juno; the latter, as its title specifies, was in the imperial palace: These libraries were royally endowed with establishments of Greek and Latin librarians; of which C. Julius Hyginus the grammarian was one.

The emperor Tiberius added another library to the palace, and attached his new building to that front which looked towards the *Via sacra*, in which quarter he himself resided; Vespasian endowed a public library in the temple
of

of peace. Trajan founded the famous *Ulpian Library* in his new forum, from whence it was at last removed to the *Collis Viminalis* to furnish the baths of Dioclesian. The *Capitoline Library* is supposed to have been founded by Domitian, and was consumed, together with the noble edifice to which it was attached, by a stroke of lightning in the time of Commodus. The emperor Hadrian enriched his favourite villa with a superb collection of books, and lodged them in a temple dedicated to Hercules. These were in succeeding times so multiplied by the munificence and emulation of the several emperors, that in the reign of Constantine, Rome contained no less than twenty-nine public libraries, of which the principal were the *Palatine* and *Ulpian*.

Though books were then collected at an immense expence, several private citizens of fortune made considerable libraries. Tyrannio the grammarian even in the time of Sylla was possessed of three thousand volumes; Epaphroditus, a grammarian also, had in later times collected thirty thousand of the most select and valuable books; but Sammonicus Serenus bequeathed to the emperor Gordian a library containing no less than sixty-two thousand volumes. It was not always a love of literature that tempted

people to these expences, for Seneca complains of the vanity of the age in furnishing their banquetting rooms with books; not for use, but for shew, and in a mere spirit of profusion. Their baths, both hot and cold, were always supplied with books to fill up an idle hour amongst the other recreations of the place; in like manner their country houses and even public offices were provided for the use and amusement of their guests or clients.

The Roman libraries in point of disposition much resembled the present fashion observed in our public ones, for the books were not placed against the walls, but brought into the area of the room in separate cells and compartments, where they were lodged in presses: The intervals between these compartments were richly ornamented with inlaid plates of glass and ivory, and marble basso-relievos. In these compartments, which were furnished with desks and couches for the accommodation of readers, it was usual to place the statues of learned men, one in each; and this we may observe is one of the few elegancies, which Rome was not indebted to Greece for, the first idea having been started by the accomplished Pollio, who in his library on Mount Aventine set up the statue of his illustrious contemporary Varro, even

even whilst he was living : It was usual also to ornament the press, where any considerable author's works were contained, with his figure in brass or plaister of a small size.

There is one more circumstance attending these public libraries, which ought not to be omitted, as it marks the liberal spirit of their institution : It was usual to appropriate an adjoining building for the use and accommodation of students, where every thing was furnished at the emperor's cost ; they were lodged, dieted and attended by servants specially appointed, and supplied with every thing, under the eye of the chief librarian, that could be wanting, whilst they were engaged in their studies and had occasion to consult the books : This establishment was kept up in a very princely stile at Alexandria in particular, where a college was endowed and a special fund appointed for its support, with a president, and proper officers under him, for the entertainment of learned strangers, who resorted thither from various parts to consult those invaluable collections, which that famous library contained in all branches of science.

N° LXVIII.

PEOPLE have a custom of excusing the enormities of their conduct by talking of their passions, as if they were under the controul of a blind necessity, and sinned because they could not help it. Before any man resorts to this kind of excuse it behoves him to examine the justice of it, and to be sure that these passions, which he thus attempts to palliate, are strictly natural, and do not spring either from the neglect of education or the crime of self-indulgence.

Of our infancy, properly so called, we either remember nothing, or few things faintly and imperfectly; some passions however make their appearance in this stage of human life, and appear to be born with us, others are born after us; some follow us to the grave, others forsake us in the decline of age.

The life of man is to be reviewed under three periods, infancy, youth, and manhood; the first includes that portion of time before reason shews itself; in the second it appears indeed, but being incompetent to the proper government of the creature, requires the aid,
support

support and correction of education ; in the third it attains to its maturity.

Now as a person's responsibility bears respect to his reason, so do human punishments bear respect to his responsibility : Infants and boys are chastised by the hand of the parent or the master ; rational adults are amenable to the laws, and what is termed mischief in the first case becomes a crime in the other. It will not avail the man to plead loss of reason by temporary intoxication, nor can he excuse himself by the plea of any sudden impulse of passion. If a prisoner tells his judge that it is his nature to be cruel, that anger, lust or malice are inherent in his constitution, no human tribunal will admit the defence ; yet thus it is that all people deal with God and the world, when they attempt to palliate their enormities, by pleading the uncontrollable propensity of their natural desires, as if the Creator had set up a tyrant in their hearts, which they were necessitated to obey.

This miserable subterfuge is no less abject than impious ; for what can be more degrading to a being, whose inherent attribute is free-agency and whose distinguishing faculty is reason, than to shelter himself from the dread of responsibility under the humiliating apology of

mental slavery? It is as if he should say—
*Excuse the irregularities of my conduct, for I am
 a brute and not a man; I follow instinct and re-
 nounce all claim to reason; my actions govern me,
 not I my actions;*—and yet the people, to whom
 I allude, generally set up this plea in excuse for
 those passions in particular, which have their
 origin in that stage of life, when the human
 mind is in the use and possession of reason; an
 imposition so glaring that it convicts itself; not-
 withstanding this it is too often seen, that
 whilst the sensualist is avowing the irresistible—
 violence of his propensities, vanity shall receive
 it not only as an atonement for the basest at-
 tempts, but as an expected tribute to the tempt-
 ing charms of beauty; nay such is the per-
 version of principle in some men, that it shall
 pass with them as a recommendation even of
 that sex, the purity of whose minds should be
 their sovereign grace and ornament.

The passion of fear seems coæval with our
 nature; if they, who have our infancy in charge,
 suffer this passion to fix and increase upon us;
 if they augment our infant fears by invented
 terrors, and present to our sight frightful objects
 to scare us; if they practise on our natural and
 defenceless timidity by blows and menaces,
 and crush us into absolute subjection of spirit

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in our early years, a human creature thus abused has enough to plead in excuse for cowardice; and yet this, which is the strongest defence we can make upon the impulse of passion, is perhaps the only one we never resort to: In most other passions we call that constitution, which is only habit.

When we reflect upon the variety of passions, to which the human mind is liable, it should seem as if reason, which is expressly implanted in us for their correction and controul, was greatly overmatched by such a host of turbulent insurgents; but upon a closer examination we may find that reason has many aids and allies, and though her antagonists are also many and mighty, yet that they are divided and distracted, whilst she can in all cases turn one passion against another, so as to counterbalance any power by its opposite, and make evil instruments in her hands conducive to moral ends: Avarice for instance will act as a counterpoise to lust and intemperance, whilst vanity on the other hand will check avarice; fear will keep a bad man honest, and pride will sometimes make a coward brave.

Observe the manners of *Palpatius* in company with his patron; assiduous, humble, obliging; for ever smiling, and so supple and obsequious,

quious, you would think he had no will of his own, and was born for the uses and occasions of others: Follow Palpatius to his house, see him with his wife and children, hear him dictate to his servants and the needy dependants, who make suit through him to his principal, you will find all things reversed; the sycophant turns out a tyrant, and he is only indebted to his hypocrisy for keeping his insolence out of sight.

Procax is one of the most dissolute men living; he is handsome, impudent, and insinuating, qualifications that ensure his success with the ladies: He professes the most vehement passion for *Fulvia*; but *Fulvia* was on the point of marrying *Vetulus*, a rich old man, who wanted an heir, and till that event took place she held out against *Procax* upon motives of convenience only: *Fulvia* soon became the wife of *Vetulus*; she had no longer any repugnance to be the mistress of *Procax*; but the same man, who had pleaded the irresistible violence of his desires before marriage, now pretended conscience, and drew back from her advances; nay he did more, he put *Vetulus* upon his guard, and *Fulvia's* virtue was too closely watched to be in any future danger: What sudden change was this in *Procax*? *Vetulus*
had

had no heirs, and Procax had a contingent interest in the entail of his estate.

Splendida, in one of her morning airings, was solicited for charity by a poor woman with an infant in her arms.—*It is not for myself, madam*, said the wretched creature, *it is for my husband, who lies under that hedge tormented with a fever, and dying for want of relief*.—*Splendida* directed her eyes towards the spot, and saw a sickly object stretched upon the ground, clad in the tattered regimental of a foot soldier: Her heart was touched, and she drew out her purse, which was full of guineas: The blood rushed into the beggar's meagre visage at the sight; *Splendida* turned over the gold; her hand delayed for a moment, and the impulse was lost; unhappily for the suppliant, *Splendida* was alone and without a witness: She put her hand once more into her pocket, and, taking out a solitary shilling, dropt it into the shrivelled palm that was stretched out to receive it, and drove on. *Splendida* returned home, dressed herself, and went to a certain great lady's assembly; a subscription was put about for the benefit of a celebrated actress; the lady condescended to receive subscriptions in person, and delivered a ticket to each contributor: *Splendida* drew forth the same purse, and wrapping twenty guineas in a paper,

put

put them into the hand of the noble beggar: The room rang with applauses of her charity—*I give it, says she, to her virtues, rather than to her talents; I bestow it on the wife and mother, not upon the actress.* Splendida on her return home took out her accompt-book, and set down twenty-one pounds one shilling to the article of charity; the shilling indeed Heaven audited on the score of alms, the pounds were posted to the account of vanity.

N° LXIX.

Favete linguis!

(HORAT.)

AN ingenious author, who some years ago published a volume under the title of *Maxims, Characters, and Reflections*, has the following remark:—*You would know how a man talks to judge of his understanding, and yet possibly (however great the paradox) the very contrary method might be less fallible; the knowing how he hears might shew it you much better.* As I had not seen this book when I gave my account of *Mr. Jedediah Fish's Academy for Hearing*, it gave me great pleasure to fall in with the sentiment of a contemporary, who
whilst

whilst he mixes with the world as a man of fashion, reviews the living manners with the sagacity of a philosopher. I transcribed the whole article, from which the above passage is extracted, and sent it to *Mr. Fish*: It will be found in the author's volume, Nº LXXI. and is aptly illustrated by two sketches of character; one of which, called Cleon, is a talker, and Theocles, the other, is a hearer.

I have been favoured with the following answer from *Mr. Fish*.

SIR,

Your's is received: I approve of the extract, and like the author's manner well: He deals in ideas rather than in words; some men talk more than they hear; others write more than they read: As benevolence should act without display, so good advice should be given in few words.

I send you the following cases according to desire.

A young man, known to his familiars by the name of *Jack Chatter*, came under my hands: The symptoms of his disorder may be thus described—*Garrulitas vix intermissa cum cachinno tantum non continuo*.—Garrulity, attended with immoderate fits of laughing, is no uncommon case,

case, when the provocation thereunto springs from jokes of a man's own making; but there was this peculiarity in *Mr. Chatter's* disease, that he would laugh where no jest was, or even at the jests of other people, rather than not laugh at all. I soon perceived this to be occasioned by exceedingly weak intellects, and an even row of very white teeth. As his malady would not yield to the ordinary prescriptions, I was forced to throw him into a regimen of skating, for which the season was then favourable: The operation succeeded to my warmest wishes, and the patient was effectually silenced by a happy dislocation of two of his fore-teeth from a fall on the ice.

Miss Kitty Scandal was put into my hands by her acquaintance in a very deplorable condition; it was the *Cacoëthes defamationis scabiosum*: The common antidotes had no effect upon her; I administered *detergents* out of *Miss Garter's Epictetus* and *Mrs. Chapone's Letters*, but the dose would not stay upon her stomach; I tried the *Pythagorean pill*, but with no better success. As the patient had a remarkable swelling about the waist, which I conceived might arise from an overflowing of the spleen, I called in my excellent friend *Dr. Ford*: The Doctor delivered her of her swelling, and *Miss*

Kitty Scandal has not been known to open her lips since.

Tom Belfry was the nuisance of society; he applied to me when he was far gone indeed; he had been black-balled by half the clubs in town, and *sent to Coventry* by the other half. I examined his case, and found it under the following class—*Vox stentoria, sempiterna, cum cerebello vacuo, necnon auribus obtusis admodum ac inertibus*.—As his organs of speech seemed in want of immediate modulation, I tried the pitch-pipe upon him repeatedly, but the vehemence of his complaint baffled all my efforts; I could never bring him down within a full octave of sound health. I was unwilling to proceed to extremities, till I had done all that my more regular practice could suggest for his relief; but when I found none but desperate remedies could save him, I caused a vein to be opened in his right arm, and drew out fourteen ounces of blood: This was in the month of March last, and the wind was then in the east with fleet and rain: I immediately ordered the patient to take boat at Black-friars, and be rowed to Chelsea-Reach and back again in an open wherry: The expected consequence ensued; a total deprivation of voice took place, and *Mr. Belfry*, being no longer able to articulate, is become

become a very companionable man, and is now in as much request with his club, as heretofore he was in disgrace with it.

Counsellor Clack is a young man of quick parts, ready wit, and strong imagination, but sorely troubled with the disease called *Lingua volubilis cum sui ipsius amore nimio et pręgravante*.—'This patient was radically cured by a strong dose of his own praises, which I took from his mouth, and made him swallow grain for grain as he had uttered them : The *nausea*, occasioned by this dose, operated so strongly on his constitution, as totally to eradicate all seeds of self-consequence, and the counsellor is become one of the modestest men, and best hearers in his profession.

Captain Swagger was continually talking of battles, and sieges, and campaigns, though he had never seen either : He arraigned the conduct of every enterprize ; and proved to demonstration, by the force of oaths, how much better it would have been managed, had he been the commander : The symptoms were too apparent to be mistaken—*Os grandiloquum, rotundum, cum dextrâ bello frigidâ*.—In this state of his disorder he was recommended to my care by the officers of his mess. I found the tumefaction so vehement, that I prescribed an
opening

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opening by incision. The captain was accordingly sent out by his commanding officer upon a scouting-party, and suffered a surprize, which effectually repelled the tumefaction: *Mr. Swagger* threw up his commission, and has been a very silent member of the civil community ever since.

I have sent you these cases out of many, as being peculiar; in common cases, the general method I take to bring any gentleman to a patient hearing, is to entertain him with his own commendations: If this simple medicine will not serve, I am forced to dash it with a few drops of slander, which is the best appeaser I know; for many of my patients will listen to that, when nothing else can silence them. This recipe however is not palatable, nor ought it to be used but with caution and discretion; I keep it therefore in reserve like laudanum for special occasions. When a patient is far advanced towards his cure, I take him with me to the gallery of the House of Commons, when certain orators, whom I have in my eye, are upon their legs to harangue; and I have always found if a convalescent can hear that, he can hear any thing.

I am, Sir, your's to command,

JEREDIAH FISH.

I am not so partial to my correspondent, as to defend him in his proceedings, and I suspect, that, whilst he is labouring to restore his patients to their ears, he may chance to take away their lives. Men, who act upon system, are apt to sit in it too far; and as prevention is always to be preferred to remedy, I could wish that parents would take early care to instruct their children in the art of *bearing*, if it were only to guard them against falling into *Mr. Fisk's* hands, when the malady may become stubborn.

I shall suggest one hint in the way of advice to fathers and mothers, which, if they are pleased to attend to it, may perhaps save some future trouble and vexation.

I would wish all parents to believe, that the human character begins to fix itself much earlier in life, than they are generally aware of. There is something very captivating in the dawning ideas of our children; we are apt to flatter and caress them for their early vivacity; we tell their smart sayings and repartees with a kind of triumph even in their presence, and the company we tell them to are always polite enough to applaud and admire them. By these means we instil our own vanity into their infant minds, and push their genius into prematurity. The

forwardness, which this practice of our's is sure to create, passes off agreeably for a time; but, when infancy ceases, it begins to annoy us, and Miss or Master appear insupportably pert. The parent then finds himself obliged to turn the other side of his countenance upon the witticisms of his child; this is not only a painful task, but probably a fruitless one; for the child by this time has made its party, and can find its admirers elsewhere: Every obliging visitor makes interest with the clever little creature; the nursery, the kitchen, the stables echo with applause; it can chatter, or mimic, or act its tricks before the servants, and be sure of an audience: The mischief is done, and the parent may snub to no purpose.

Let parents therefore first correct themselves, before they undertake that office for their children: Education is incompatible with self-indulgence, and the impulse of vanity is too often mistaken for the impulse of nature: When Miss is a wit, I am apt to suspect that her mother is not over-wise.

N^o LXX.

—*Mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur*— (HORAT.)

—“*The story slyly points at you.*”

PRIDE is never more offensive, than when it condescends to be civil; whereas vanity, whenever it forgets itself, naturally assumes good-humour. Nothing was ever more agreeable than Vanessa t’other night, when I found her in a small circle over her fire-side, where a certain gentleman had taken the whole task of talking on himself, and left Vanessa nothing else to do, but to shew him just as much attention as served to make him believe she was listening, and left her at liberty to rest her own imagination in the mean-time.

I found this gentleman at the close of a pathetic narrative he had been giving of some adventure, which he had met with in his travels, and which he wound up with saying—“I am afraid, ladies, this story has made you melancholy.” If he had said *wearry*, he had been nearer to the truth: Methought Vanessa once in her life forgot her usual politeness, when she answered him—“Oh! no; not at all”—but

she was thinking of something else, and the story I should guess had been very circumstantial; so that I heartily forgave her. The talking gentleman however was not disposed to take her word, but stuck to his opinion, and had so much consideration for the company, as to promise them another story, which should be altogether as diverting, as the former one had been mournful. There was an effort in the countenance of Vanessa, which convinced me of her good-humour; she strove to welcome this promise with a smile; but it was a smile, that cost her some pains to produce, and if the talker had possessed but one grain of intuition, he must have discovered that all such promises cut up performance, and that no story will endure a preface. I felt at that moment all the awkward embarrassment of his situation, as if it had been my own; and it was a sensible relief to me, when Vanessa gave a little hitch to her chair, as if drawing nearer to the story-teller, and at the same time stooping forward, put herself into a listening attitude. She never appeared so amiable in my eyes, and I began to take heart — *What pains and trouble, thought I, does this poor man take to make himself agreeable, when every struggle carries him further from his point! And how little does he know what an easy thing*

it is to those, who have the secret of succeeding without any effort at all!—I use almost the very words of a contemporary author, and I am obliged to him for them.

As for the story, which now followed, there is no occasion to repeat it; if it had made its entrance without a herald; if it had grown out of the conversation naturally, and not been grafted in against nature; and if it had been less prolix, or told with more point, the story had not been amiss; it was a good one in its own country, but it was lamed in its journey, and Vanessa did not seem exactly to know when it was finished, until the relater made a second apostrophe, hoping he had now repaired all former damages, and reinstated the ladies in their usual good spirits. Vanessa now found it necessary to say something, and well knowing, without doubt, that people like to be treated as if they had sensibility, although they have none, she passed a few compliments upon the story very neatly turned; when an elderly gentleman (who, as I afterwards found out, was father to the talking gentleman) observed to him, that as he had made us grave, and made us merry, nothing now remained but to make us wise.—“And who is fit for that purpose,” added he, “as the lady of the house
“herself?”

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"herself!" Vanessa very apely replied, that she knew but one way to impose that belief on the company, and that was by keeping silence.—"And what is so edifying," resumed he, "as to keep silence? What is so good a lesson of wisdom, as to see one, who can talk so well, forbear to do it, until other tongues have run their course?"—I stole a glance at the talkative gentleman, and to my utter surprise he was so far from being sensible of the rebuff; that he was actually preparing for another onset.—"What you remark upon silence," cried he, "puts me in mind of an admirable story."—"That may well be," answered the old gentleman; "but give me leave first to tell you a story, that may put you in mind of silence."—

"Jupiter and Apollo came down from Olympus upon a visit to king Midas; Mercury had been dispatched to apprise him of the guests he was to entertain, and to signify to him, that it was the pleasure of the gods to be received with no extraordinary honours, but to be considered only as travellers, who came to pay a visit to his court, and take a view of his capital. On the day appointed, Jupiter, in the person of an elderly Athenian gentleman, and Apollo as his son, presented

- " themselves in the great saloon of the palace :
 " Midas, surrounded by his courtiers, and glit-
 " tering in his richest robes, received the gods
 " habited in this simple attire, and unattended.
 " The injunctions of Mercury were neglected,
 " for the feast was the most sumptuous that art
 " and luxury could devise ; and the gods were
 " disgusted with the vanity of their host, and
 " the profusion of his entertainment. When
 " Midas had thus contrived to display the wealth
 " and splendor of his court to his celestial
 " guests, his next study was to impress them
 " with an opinion of his talents and accom-
 " plishments : He discoursed to Jupiter, without
 • " ceasing, upon his maxims and rules of govern-
 " ment ; he treated him with innumerable anec-
 " dotes and events, calculated to set off his own
 " wisdom, consequence, and good policy, and
 " of every tale he made himself the hero. The
 • " courtiers kept silence through fear, the deities
 " through contempt ; no voice was heard but
 " the voice of Midas. He had not the sense
 " to discern the impropriety of his being an in-
 " cessant talker, when he ought only to have
 " been a respectful hearer ; and so consummate
 " was his vanity, that having possessed Jupiter
 " with impressions, as he foolishly imagined, of
 " his wisdom and science, he flattered himself
 " nothing

“ nothing was wanting but to recommend him-
 “ self to Apollo by a specimen of his accom-
 “ plishments in music and poetry. A band of
 “ minstrels were summoned, who performed a
 “ kind of prelude on their harps by way of
 “ flourish before the master-artist began, when
 “ Midas, starting from his seat as if with sudden
 “ inspiration, seized his lyre, and struck up a
 “ strain, which he accompanied with his voice,
 “ whilst his self-conceit inspired him to believe
 “ he could rival Apollo himself in harmony,
 “ and even provoke him to envy.

“ As soon as Midas laid down his lyre, the
 “ gods rose up to depart ; when instead of those
 “ applauses which he looked for, and expected
 “ as a tribute due to his art even from the im-
 “ mortals themselves, Jupiter, turning towards
 “ him with a frown, which brought into his
 “ countenance the inherent majesty of the thun-
 “ derer, thus accosted him — ‘ Had you enter-
 “ tained us, O Midas, in the manner I pre-
 “ scribed, and met the condescension of the
 “ gods with the modesty that becomes a mortal,
 “ we had left a blessing with our host, instead
 “ of a reproof : But when you affected to dazzle
 “ me, who am myself the dispenser of all mortal
 “ attainments, with the vain display of your
 “ wealth and wisdom ; and when you rashly
 “ assailed

"assailed the ears of Apollo himself, who pre-
 "sides over music and poetry, with the barba-
 "rous jingle of your lyre, and the hoarse un-
 "tuneable dissonance of your voice, you foolishly
 "forgot both yourself and us; and by talking
 "and singing without intermission, when you
 "should rather have listened to us with atten-
 "tion, you reverse the application of those fa-
 "culties I have bestowed upon you, not consi-
 "dering that when I gave to man two organs
 "of hearing, and only one of speech, I marked
 "out the use he was to make of those dispen-
 "sations: To remind you therefore of my
 "design, and your duty, I shall curtail your
 "tongue, and lengthen your ears."—Jupiter
 "ceased speaking; and whilst the deities re-
 "ascended to Olympus, the ears of the monarch
 "sprouted up into the ears of an ass."

The moral of the fable, and the personal ap-
 plication of it, were too obvious to be mistaken
 by any of the company. Vanessa's sensibility
 suffered visibly on the occasion; but she soon
 broke the painful silence, and addressing herself
 to the old gentleman—"I am obliged to you
 "for your fable," says she, "and shall edify by
 "the moral; but still I cannot help the weak-
 "ness of a woman, and must feel a compassion
 "for poor Midas, whose trespass, being of a
 "good-

"good-humoured fort, deserved more mercy
 "than it met with.—I confess the art of being
 "agreeable, frequently miscarries through the
 "ambition which accompanies it. Wit, learn-
 "ing, wisdom—what can more effectually con-
 "duce to the profit and delight of society?
 "Yet I am sensible that a man may be too
 "invariably wise, learned, or witty to be agree-
 "able: And I take the reason of this to be,
 "that pleasure cannot be bestowed by the
 "simple and unmixed exertion of any one fa-
 "culty or accomplishment; if every word a
 "man speaks is to be wit or wisdom, if he is
 "never to relax either in look or utterance
 "from his superiority of character, society can-
 "not endure it: The happy gift of being agree-
 "able seems to consist not in one, but in an
 "assemblage of talents tending to communicat-
 "delight; and how many are there, who by
 "easy manners, sweetness of temper, and a va-
 "riety of other undefinable qualities, possess the
 "power of pleasing without any visible effort,
 "without the aids of wit, wisdom, or learning,
 "nay, as it should seem, in their defiance; and
 "this without appearing even to know that
 "they possess it? Whilst another, by labouring
 "to entertain us too well, entertains us as poor
 "Midas did his visitors."

When

When Vanessa had done speaking, the hour reminded me that I ought to take my leave, which I did with regret, repeating to myself as I walked homewards—*This lady should never be seen in a circle.*

N° LXXI.

AS I was turning over a parcel of old papers some time ago, I discovered an original letter from Mr. Caswell, the mathematician, to the learned Dr. Bentley, when he was living in Bishop Stillingfleet's family, inclosing an account of an apparition taken from the mouth of a clergyman who saw it: In this account there are some curious particulars, and I shall therefore copy the whole narrative without any omission, except of the name of the deceased person who is supposed to have *appeared*, for reasons that will be obvious.

“To the Rev. Mr. Richard Bentley, at my
“Lord Bishop of Worcester's House in Park
“Street, in Westminster, London.

“SIR,

“When I was in London, April last, I fully
“intended

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“intended to have waited upon you again, as
 “I said, but a cold and lameness seized me next
 “day; the cold took away my voice, and
 “the other my power of walking; so I pre-
 “sently took coach for Oxford. I am much
 “your debtor, and in particular for your good
 “intentions in relation to Mr. D. though that,
 “as it has proved, would not have turned to my
 “advantage: However, I am obliged to you
 “upon that and other accounts, and if I had
 “opportunity to shew it, you should find how
 “much I am your faithful servant.

“I have sent you inclosed a relation of an
 “apparition; the story I had from two persons,
 “who each had it from the author, and yet
 “their accounts somewhat varied, and passing
 “through more mouths has varied much more;
 “therefore I got a friend to bring me to the
 “author at a chamber, where I wrote it down
 “from the author’s mouth; after which I read
 “it to him, and gave him another copy; he
 “said he could swear to the truth of it, as far
 “as he is concerned: He is the Curate of
 “Warblington, Batchelour of Arts of Trinity
 “College in Oxford, about six years standing
 “in the University; I hear no ill report of his
 “behaviour here: He is now gone to his Cu-
 “racy; he has promised to send up the hands
 “of

“ of the tenant and his man, who is a smith by
 “ trade, and the farmer’s men, as far as they
 “ are concerned. Mr. Brereton, the Rector,
 “ would have him say nothing of the story, for
 “ that he can get no tenant, though he has
 “ offered the house for ten pounds a year less.
 “ Mr. P. the former incumbent, whom the
 “ apparition represented, was a man of a very
 “ ill report, supposed to have got children of
 “ his maid, and to have murdered them; but
 “ I advised the Curate to say nothing himself of
 “ this last part of P. but leave that to the
 “ parishioners, who knew him. Those who
 “ knew this P. say he had exactly such a
 “ gown, and that he used to whistle,

“ Yours,

“ J. CASWELL.

I desire you not to suffer any copy of this to be
 taken, lest some Mercury news-teller should
 print it, till the Curate has sent up the testi-
 mony of others and self.

H. H. Dec. 15, 1695.

NARRATIVE.

“ At Warblington, near Havant in Hamp-
 “ shire, within six miles of Portsmouth, in the
 “ parsonage house dwelt Thomas Perce the
 “ tenant, with his wife and a child, a man-ser-
 “ vant

“vant Thomas and a maid-servant.
 “About the beginning of August, Anno 1695,
 “on a Monday, about nine or ten at night, all
 “being gone to bed, except the maid with the
 “child, the maid being in the kitchen, and
 “having raked up the fire, took a candle in
 “one hand, and the child in the other arm,
 “and turning about saw one in a black gown
 “walking through the room, and thence out of
 “the door into the orchard: Upon this the
 “maid, hasting up stairs, having recovered but
 “two steps, cried out; on which the master
 “and mistress ran down, found the candle in
 “her hand, she grasping the child about its
 “neck with the other arm: She told them the
 “reason of her crying out; she would not that
 “night tarry in the house, but removed to
 “another belonging to one Henry Salter, far-
 “mer; where she cried out all the night from
 “the terror she was in, and she could not be
 “persuaded to go any more to the house upon
 “any terms.

“On the morrow, (i. e. Tuesday) the
 “tenant’s wife came to me, lodging then at
 “Havant, to desire my advice, and have con-
 “sult with some friends about it; I told her I
 “thought it was a snare, and that they had a
 “mind to abuse Mr. Brereton the Rector,
 “whose

" whose house it was; she desired me to come
 " up; I told her I would come up and sit up or
 " lie there, as she pleased; for then as to all
 " stories of ghosts and apparitions I was an in-
 " fidel: I went thither and sat up the Tuesday
 " night with the tenant and his man-servant:
 " About twelve or one o'clock I searched all
 " the rooms in the house to see if any body
 " were hid there to impose upon me: At last
 " we came into a lumber-room, there I smiling
 " told the tenant that was with me, that I
 " would call the apparition, if there was any,
 " and oblige him to come: The tenant then
 " seemed to be afraid, but I told him I would
 " defend him from harm! and then I repeated
 " *Barbara, celarent Darii, &c.* jestingly; on
 " this the tenant's countenance changed, so that
 " he was ready to drop down with fear: Then
 " I told him I perceived he was afraid, and I
 " would prevent its coming, and repeated *Bar-*
 " *aliphton, &c.* then he recovered his spirits
 " pretty well and we left the room and went
 " down into the kitchen, where we were before,
 " and sat up there the remaining part of the
 " night and had no manner of disturbance.

" Thursday night the tenant and I lay toge-
 " ther in one room and the man in another
 " room, and he saw something walk along in a
 " black

“black gown and place itself against a window,
 “and there stood for some time, and then
 “walked off. Friday morning the man re-
 “lating this, I asked him why he did not call
 “me, and I told him I thought that was a trick
 “or sham; he told me the reason why he did
 “not call me was, that he was not able to
 “speak or move. Friday night we lay as be-
 “fore, and Saturday night, and had no disturb-
 “ance either of the nights.

“Sunday night I lay by myself in one room
 “(not that where the man saw the apparition)
 “and the tenant and his man in one bed in
 “another room; and betwixt twelve and two
 “the man heard something walk in their room
 “at the bed’s foot, and whistling very well; at
 “last it came to the bed’s side, drew the cur-
 “tain and looked on them; after some time it
 “moved off; then the man called to me, desir-
 “ed me to come, for that there was some-
 “thing in the room went about whistling:
 “I asked him whether he had any light or
 “could strike one, he told me no; then I leapt
 “out of bed, and, not staying to put on my
 “clothes, went out of my room and along a
 “gallery to the door, which I found locked or
 “bolted; I desired him to unlock the door,
 “for that I could not get in; then he got out

" of bed and opened the door, which was near,
 " and went immediately to bed again; I went
 " in three or four steps, and, it being a moon-
 " shine night, I saw the apparition move from
 " the bed side, and clap up against the wall that
 " divided their room and mine: I went and
 " stood directly against it within my arm's
 " length of it, and asked it in the name of God
 " what it was, that made it come disturbing
 " of us; I stood some time expecting an answer,
 " and receiving none, and thinking it might be
 " some fellow hid in the room to fright me, I
 " put out my arm to feel it, and my hand seemingly
 " went through the body of it, and felt no manner
 " of substance, till it came to the wall; then I
 " drew back my hand, and still it was in the
 " same place: Till now I had not the least fear,
 " and even now had very little; then I adjured
 " it to tell me what it was: When I had said
 " those words, it, keeping its back against the
 " wall, moved gently along towards the door:
 " I followed it, and it, going out at the door,
 " turned its back toward me: It went a little
 " along the gallery; I followed it a little into
 " the gallery, and it disappeared, where there
 " was no corner for it to turn, and before it
 " came to the end of the gallery, where was
 " the stairs. Then I found myself very cold
 " from

"from my feet as high as my middle, though
 "I was not in great fear; I went into the bed
 "betwixt the tenant and his man, and they
 "complained of my being exceeding cold.
 "The tenant's man leaned over his master in
 "the bed, and saw me stretch out my hand
 "towards the apparition, and heard me speak
 "the words; the tenant also heard the words:
 "The apparition seemed to have a morning
 "gown of a darkish colour, no hat nor cap,
 "short black hair, a thin meagre visage of a
 "pale swarthy colour, seemed to be of about
 "forty-five or fifty years old; the eyes half
 "shut, the arms hanging down; the hands
 "visible beneath the sleeve; of a middle stature.
 "I related this description to Mr. John Lardner,
 "rector of Havant, and to Major Battin of
 "Langstone in Havant parish; they both said
 "the description agreed very well to Mr. P.
 "a former rector of the place, who has been
 "dead above twenty years: Upon this the
 "tenant and his wife left the house, which has
 "remained void since.

"The Monday after last Michaelmas-day, a
 "man of Chodson in Warwickshire having been
 "at Havant fair, passed by the foresaid parsonage-
 "house about nine or ten at night, and saw a
 "light in most of the rooms of the house; his

"pathway being close by the house, he, won-
 "dering at the light, looked into the kitchen
 "window, and saw only a light, but turning
 "himself to go away, he saw the appearance
 "of a man in a long gown; he made haste
 "away; the apparition followed him over a
 "piece of glebe land of several acres, to a lane,
 "which he crossed, and over a little meadow,
 "then over another lane to some pales, which
 "belong to farmer Henry Salter my landlord,
 "near a barn, in which were some of the
 "farmer's men and some others; this man went
 "into the barn, told them how he was frightened
 "and followed from the parsonage-house by an
 "apparition, which they might see standing
 "against the pales, if they went out; they went
 "out, and saw it scratch against the pales, and
 "make a hideous noise; it stood there some
 "time and then disappeared; their description
 "agreed with what I saw. This last account
 "I had from the man himself, whom it followed,
 "and also from the farmer's men.

"THO. WILKINS, Curate of W.

"Dec. 11, 1695, Oxon."

I shall make no remark upon this genuine
 account, except as to the passage which I have
 put in italics: If Mr. Wilkins was thoroughly
 possessed

possess of himself at that moment, as he deposes, and is strictly correct in his fact, the narrative is established.

N^o LXXII.

I SHALL now proceed to lay before the public, such an account as I have been enabled to collect of the several Greek writers of comedy.

The learned reader needs not to be informed, how little is to be found in Aristotle's Poetics on the subject of comedy; that treatise by no means answers to the general profession of its title; if it had come down to us as perfect and entire, as it probably was when the author put the last hand to it, and presented a correct copy of his work to Alexander, we might conclude otherwise of it; but to speak of it as it is, we can call it nothing more than a dissertation upon tragedy, in which many things are evidently out of place and order, some no doubt lost, and others mutilated: It is thus considered by the learned commentator Daniel Heinsius, who in his supplementary treatise annexed to his edi-

tion, professedly speaks only of the construction of tragedy, and endeavours with great diligence and perspicuity to methodize the whole work, and dispose his author's system into some order and regularity.

With the exception of a few obvious remarks upon the epic, as tending to illustrate the drama, and two or three passages where comedy is spoken of only as contrasted with tragedy, the whole of this celebrated dissertation is nothing more than a set of rules for the drama, which are mere transcripts from the compositions of the great writers of the Homeric tragedy, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides: He analyzes and defines a poem, then actually carried to its perfection; but gives no new lights, no leading instructions, for the furtherance and improvement of what had not arrived to the like state of maturity.

With the remains of the three tragic poets above mentioned in our hands, I profess I do not see how we are edified by Aristotle's dissertation, which offers nothing but what occurs upon the reading of their dramas; unless posterity had seen fit to abide by the same laws, which they observed, and the modern tragedy had been made exactly to conform to the Greek model.

Aristotle,

Aristotle, as we have before remarked, speaks of no comedy antecedent to the comedy of Epicharmus: There is reason to think that this author did not fall in with the personal comedy in the licentious manner it prevailed upon the Athenian stage, even to the time of Aristotle; for it was not reformed there, till the personal satirists were awed into better respect by the Macedonian princes, who succeeded to Alexander; whereas Epicharmus wrote for the court of an absolute prince.

Now it is remarkable, that Aristotle makes no strictures upon the licentiousness of the Athenian comedy, nor offers any rules for the correction of the stage, though the schools proscribed it, and the tribunals were at open hostility with it. It is plain he states things as they were, not as they ought to have been; for he pronounces of comedy — *that it is a picture of human nature, worse and more deformed than the original.*

I cannot hold this to be a just character of comedy, as it stood at the time when Aristotle pronounced it: The only entire comedies we have to refer to, are a contradiction to the assertion; for no one will contend that the corrupt and abominable manners of the times in which Aristophanes wrote, did not fully warrant

the severity of his satire, or that his characters of depravity are in general overcharged, *and his pictures of human nature more deformed than their originals.* As for the rest of the comic fraternity, their fragments only can plead for them; but they are fragments of such a nature, as prove them to have been moralists of the sublimest sort, and they have been collected, translated, and applauded, by the gravest and most sententious of the Christian writers for many ages. I will venture to say, that in these scattered reliques of the comic stage, more useful knowledge and good sense, better maxims for right conduct in life, and a more generous display of benevolence, justice, public spirit; and all the moral virtues of natural religion are to be found, than in all the writings of the philosophers, which are so much more entire.

Socrates, it is true, could hardly be prevailed upon to enter the comic theatre, but I infer very little against the poets on that account; Plato, I am aware, though an intimate of Aristophanes, banished the drama out of his visionary republic; but what is that more than to say, that if all men were virtuous there would be no need of satirists? The comic poets in return lashed the philosophers over the stage, and they had what they merited, the public

public applause on their side; the schools and academies of sophists furnished an inexhaustible fund for wholesome ridicule; their contradictory first principles, their dæmons and clouds, and water and fire, with all their idle systems and hypotheses, their fabulous conceits, dreams and devices to catch the vulgar, and the affected rigour of their manners, whilst in secret they were addicted to the grossest debauchery and impurity, were continual subjects of satire; and if hypocrisy is not the comic poet's lawful game, what is? There is not a play of Aristophanes to be named, in which these sanctified sinners have not their share in the ridicule; and amongst the fragments above mentioned, a very large proportion falls to their lot.

Aristotle, who had very little feeling for Plato and his academy, or indeed for practical philosophy in general (which he seems to have professed only in opposition to Xenocrates) concerned himself no further about the state of the stage, than to comment and remark upon the tragedies of the three chief writers above mentioned; and it is humiliating enough to the pride of criticism to observe, that tragedy, after all his pains to hold it up to the standard of Sophocles and Euripides, sunk with those authors, and was no more heard of; whilst comedy,

medy, without his help, and in defiance of his neglect, rose in credit with the world, till it attained perfection under the auspices of Menander.

I have spoken of tragedy as a *written poem* before comedy of the same description, because I think that Sufarion did not *write* comedy, though he acted it so early as the fiftieth Olympiad; and I also think that Thespis did *write* tragedy in the sixty-first Olympiad, if not sooner; in other words, although the complexion of the original drama was comic in the most extravagant degree, yet it appears probable that tragedy had the start in point of publication. The nature of the first comedy, compared with that of the first tragedy, seems to warrant this opinion; for it is easy to suppose that the raillery and satire of the village masques, which would pass off at a lawless festival, spoken off-hand and without the malice of premeditation, would not so readily have been committed to writing by the poet, as the tragic drama; which being composed in honour of deceased heroes, or on religious and grave subjects, not only called for greater deliberation on the part of the author, but would also be made public without danger or offence.

It

It now remains to enquire into the chronology of the *written* comedy,

I have already observed, that Aristotle ascribes the first written comedy to Epicharmus,

Both Aristotle and Horace call him a *Sicilian*, but in what particular place he was born is not agreed; some contend that he was a Syracusan, some that he was a native of Craftum, others of Megara in Sicily: Diomedes the grammarian says he was born in Cos, and derives the word comedy from the name of that island, a derivation that sets aside his authority altogether. The father of Epicharmus was named Chimarus, or according to others Tityrus, and his mother Sicida. Cicero in his *Tusculans* calls him, *acutum nec insulsum hominem*: Deme- trius Phaleræus celebrates him for the elegant and apposite choice of his epithets, on which account the Greeks gave the name of *Epichar- mion* to his stile, making it proverbial for its beauty and purity. It is difficult to fix the precise time when he began to write comedy, especially as he lived to the great age of ninety-seven: It is certain however he was still writing in the reign of Hiero, in or about Olymp. LXXIV. at which time Phormis also wrote comedy in Sicily; and Chionides, Dinolo-

thus and Magnes, comic poets, flourished at Athens.

Suidas's chronology does not agree with Aristotle's, for he makes Chionides antecedent to Epicharmus, and calls him the first writer of comedy; adding, that Evetes, Euxenides and Mylus, all Athenians, were his contemporaries; he allows, however, that Epicharmus and Phormis were the first writers in the island of Sicily; but this is in the vague manner of his dates, and not to be relied upon: He takes no notice of Aristotle's express assertion, that Epicharmus was long senior to Chionides; and yet he might have recollected, that facts are so far in favour of Aristotle's chronology of these poets, that there is a title upon record of one of Chionides's plays called *The Persians*, which must have been posterior to the Persian æra, when it is on all hands agreed that Epicharmus was living.

Amongst the epigrams of Theocritus, published by Henry Stevens in 1579, there are some lines upon Epicharmus, which appear to have been inscribed upon the pedestal of a statue of brass, which the Syracusans had set up in his honour as their fellow-citizen: It consists of ten lines in the Doric dialect, which he used; it settles the point of his birth, expressly
saying

saying he was a Syracusan, and ascribes to him the invention of Comedy—

—Χῶ'ινηρ, ὁ τὰν Κωμῳδίαν
Εὐρών Επίχαρμος.

“Epicharmus, the man who invented Comedy.” In the conclusion, it celebrates him for the many useful maxims which he gave for the instruction of youth; but this I am disposed to think may apply to the circumstance of his having been a schoolmaster at Syracuse; for if we are to take our judgment of Epicharmus’s drama from his imitator Plautus, perhaps its morality, though not to be overlooked amongst other excellencies, is nevertheless not the most striking feature in its character. And though it is probable that Epicharmus did not launch out into that personality, which the free Athenians indulged to such excess, yet I can suppose him to have been not very chaste in his dialogue, from the anecdote which Plutarch gives us, of his being heavily fined and compelled to manual labour by order of Hiero for certain obscene jests, which he suffered to pass in hearing of his queen: I must ground another remark upon this anecdote, respecting the time in which he is generally thought to have struck
out

out his comedy, as being long antecedent to the time of Hiero; which being admitted, it will follow that he was near the close of his life, when this sentence of manual labour was executed upon him; a kind of punishment so very unlikely to be inflicted on a man of ninety-six years by a prince of Hiero's magnanimity and benevolence, that if I am to take the anecdote for granted, I cannot assent to those authorities that have placed him so high in time, for the purpose only of putting his title of first founder of comedy out of dispute.

Upon the whole, I think it likely the Athenians wrote comedy as soon as the Sicilians, but that Epicharmus was the first, who formed his drama upon the poems of Homer: It is also clear, that his countryman and contemporary Phormis wrote comedy as soon, or nearly as soon as he did; for although Theocritus, in the epigram above cited, says expressly that Epicharmus struck out comedy, yet it must be remarked that Theocritus was a Syracusan by birth, living in the time of Ptolemy Lagus; and in giving this testimony for his fellow-citizen, it is more than probable he spoke locally of the *Sicilian* comedy only, as Suidas did in after times, when he said that Epichar-

mus

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mus and Phormis first struck out comedy in Sicily.

I would therefore fix Epicharmus's first comedy antecedent to Olymp. LXXV. at the lowest date, because we have it from good authority that he was teaching scholars at Syracuse four years before the Persian æra; and this date is confirmed by the age of Phormis, who certainly flourished in the time of Gelon, and was in great favour in the court of that prince, who was predecessor to Hiero, and was succeeded by him in Olymp. LXXVII,

N^o LXXIII.

EPICCHARMUS was a liberal benefactor to the stage. Porphyry says that Apollodorus the grammarian made a collection of his plays in ten volumes; Suidas reckons fifty-two; Lycon only thirty-five; but modern philologists have given the titles of forty, with the authorities by which they are ascertained.

It is not my purpose in these papers to make a practice of loading the page with lists of titles, which may too truly be called dead names;

names; but in the instance of an author like Epicharmus, who stands at the head of his department, every relique seems an object of some curiosity; and therefore, although the following catalogue may strike the dramatic reader as what may properly enough be called *a beggarly account of empty boxes*, yet I shall proceed to enumerate the titles of forty comedies, all of which are, upon good grounds of criticism, ascribed to this celebrated author.

TITLES OF THE COMEDIES OF EPICHARMUS.

The Husbandman. The Halcyon. Amycus, Son of Neptune. The Banditti. Atalanta. The Bacchæ. Buphris. Earth and Sea. The Fathers of the People. The Bacchanalians. Diphilus. Hope. The Festival. The Celebration of the Victory. Hebe's Wedding. Juno's Nuptials. Vulcan, or The Revells. The Ambassadors to the Oracle. The Cyclops. The Reasoner. The Megarensian. The Muses. The Islands. Niobe's Wedding. Ulysses the Deserter. Ulysses Shipwreckt. The Chatterlings. The Pædagogues. The Paragon. The Persians. The Statesman. Prometheus, the Fire-stealer. Pyrrha, the Wife of Deucalion. The Sirens. The Isle of Scyros. The Sphynx.
The

*The Trojans. Philoctetes. The Chorus Troop.
The Potters.*

The same respect, which led me to insert these titles, led me also to search with all possible diligence for every fragment which I could find of Epicarmus. I wish they had been more in number, and of greater importance than they are; but such as they are, I have reason to believe they are the whole amount of what can be picked up from the wreck of this once valuable poet. The reader must not expect, that either in this author's instance, or that of any other Greek comedian, except in very few cases, that the particular play can be ascertained, to which the fragments belong; for the grammarians and others, who quote them, only give the name of the author, and not that of the comedy from which they extract them. I must in this place once for all give vent to an anxiety, which presses on my mind respecting these fragments of the Greek comedy, whether the insertion of them will or will not be approved of by the generality of my readers: My sole object is to furnish them with rational and moral amusement, and if I fail of that object in these my hearty endeavours, I have taken a great deal of pains to render these passages into

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English in the best manner my capacity enabled me to do, to a very unfortunate purpose indeed. The learned reader will bear me witness, that these fragments have been the admiration of ages; and I am sensible that very many of them possess intrinsic beauty both of stile and sentiment; and if my translations have not robbed them of their original merit, some pleasure, and let me hope some profit, may attend their perusal. I have studied so to class them, as not to burthen or distract the reader with a mere succession of miscellaneous quotations without any reference or connection, which I am sensible could not be an agreeable mode of publication, though Stobæus, Hertelius and some others have taken it up; but on the contrary, I have endeavoured to introduce them with some anecdote or other, which serves to weave them into the thread of the work. Most of the translations will be found in metre, in which I have strove to copy the free stile of our old metrical comic poets: Some I have turned into rhyme, where the thought allowed it, and the expressions were terse and epigrammatical: Others I have put into prose; and in all I have been as close and faithful to the original, as the language and my construction of the author would permit. If the candid reader will accept this preface

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face in apology, I shall give him no further trouble on the subject.

Epicharmus, in one of his comedies (we may suppose *The Sausman*) introduces the following scene from some man of low birth to a prating old woman, who is vapouring about her ancestry.

" Good gossip, if you love me, prate no more :

" What are your genealogies to me ?

" Away to those, who have more need of them !

" Let the degenerate wretches, if they can,

" Dig up dead honour from their father's tombs,

" And boast it for their own.—Vain, empty boast !

" When every common fellow, that they meet,

" If accident hath not cut off the scroll,

" Can shew a list of ancestry as long.

" You call the Scythians barbarous, and despise them ;

" Yet Anacharsis was a Scythian born ;

" And every man of a like noble nature,

" Tho' he were moulded from an ADONIS stone,

" Is nobler than your pedigrees can make him."

The following is a false antithesis, in which bodily strength is substituted for mental—

" It demands the strength of a lion to sub-
due the weakness of love."

MOORE'S MAXIMS.

" Be sober in thought ! be slow in belief !
" These are the finews of wisdom."

"It is the part of a wise man to foresee
"what ought to be done, so shall he not repent
"of what is done."

"Throw not away thine anger upon trifles!
"Reason, and not rage, should govern."

"Mankind are more indebted to industry
"than to ingenuity: The gods set up their
"favours at a price, and industry is the pur-
"chaser."

"A man without merit, shall live without
"envy; but who would wish to escape on these
"terms?"

"Live so as to hold yourself prepared either
"for a long life, or for a short one!"

There is no subject, which the comic poets
whet their wits upon more frequently than mar-
riage. The wives of Syracuse were not much
obliged to Epicharmus for the following fally.

"Marriage is like a cast of the dice: If you
"get a wife of good morals and a quiet temper
"withal, happy is your lot: If you light upon
"a gadding, gossiping, extravagant hussy, it
"is not a wife you wed, but an eternal plague
"in the apparel of a woman. There is not in
"the habitable globe so dire a torment; I feel
"it to my sorrow; the better luck is his, who
"has never tried it."

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Mr. Congreve, in his *Double Dealer*, has the following passage between Mellafont and Cynthia upon the very eve of their nuptials.

Cynth. *Then I find marriage is like cards; if either of us have a good hand, it is an accident of fortune.*

Mell. *No, marriage is rather like a game at bowls: Fortune indeed makes the match, and the two nearest, and sometimes the two farthest are together; but the game depends entirely upon judgment.*

Cynth. *Still it is a game, and consequently one of us must be a loser.*

Mell. *Not at all; only a friendly trial of skill, and the winnings to be laid out in an entertainment.*

Neither this, nor any part of the scene to which it appertains, is in Mr. Congreve's best manner: The wit does not flow, but is pumped up with labour, and not very clean when it comes.

Of *Phormis*, the contemporary of Epicharmus, no fragments are to be found.

Chionides of Athens wrote comedy before the Persian æra, and is the oldest writer of the Athenian stage. All the memorials I can obtain of him are, that he wrote three plays, intitled, *The Heroës*, *The Lyars* and *The Poor Men*.

Magnes was an Athenian, and began to appear as a writer of comedy, whilst *Chionides*

was living: Aristophanes makes mention of him in his play of *The Knights*. The Scholiast in his comment on the passage observes, that all his works are perished, nothing remaining but the titles of nine comedies, of which two bear the same names with two of Aristophanes, viz. *The Frogs*, and *The Birds*; the same Scholiast informs us that Magnes bore away two prizes.

Dinolochus was contemporary with Magnes: He used the Doric dialect, and is said to have produced fourteen plays. Some place his birth at Syracuse, others at Agrigentum. Suidas says he flourished so early as Olymp. LXXIII. but this ill agrees with the circumstance of his being the son, or as others contend, the scholar of Epicharmus. His works have totally perished.

These five poets, three of whom were Sicilians, must be called The Fathers of Comedy, and all that now remains of them is comprised in the few short passages here inserted.

Whilst their comedies were in representation, tragedy was advancing under Pratinas and Chærilus, and Æschylus had already taken possession of the stage: Sophocles and Euripides were born, the former six years before the latter: Ien, surnamed Xuthis, son of Orthomenes of Chios, began to write tragedy in the first year
of

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of Olymp. LXXXII. Æschylus being then dead, *Theognis*, (from the coldness of his drama nicknamed *Snow*) was contemporary with Ion.

The magistracy of Athens in Olymp. LXXXV. when Myrrichides was archon, published a decree, prohibiting the representation of comedies in Athens: This decree held in force only two years under Glaucides and Theopompus; for when Euthymenes succeeded to that annual dignity, he found it expedient to gratify the people by a revocation of the edict, and the comic muse was reinstated on the stage by the celebrated triumvirate of Eupolis, Cratinus and Aristophanes; Cratinus opening the theatre with his celebrated comedy of *The Winter Amusements*, Eupolis with *The New Moons*, and Aristophanes with *The Acharnians*.

N° LXXIV.

CRATINUS, Eupolis and Aristophanes are generally classed together as rivals and principals in what is called *The Old Comedy*. Cratinus was senior in age to both his competitors, and Eupolis is charged by the old annotator

upon Aristophanes of having copied from him very freely: I confess this is stubborn authority, and yet it seems hard to believe that Eupolis, who was so constantly engaged in competition with his rival, should expose himself to certain detection of so disgraceful a sort; and had it been so, I should rather have expected to meet with the charge in the text of Aristophanes, than in the comment; I must add, that upon the closest search I can find nothing that favours this imputation in any other author which speaks of Eupolis, but many circumstances on the contrary which seem to place his pretensions to originality on as good ground, as that of his contemporaries, with whom he is equally celebrated.

These poets were in high favour with the people on account of the boldness and personality of their satire, and for the same reason proportionably obnoxious to the nobles and magistrates, whom they lashed without mercy. Aristophanes was much the least bitter of the three, and yet we have some smart specimens of his severity. Persius seems to make this distinction in the following passage—

*Audaci quicunque afflate Cratino,
Iratum Eupolidem prægrandi cum sene palles,
Aspice et hæc.*

In

In these lines he characterizes Cratinus and Eupolis by the epithets of *audax* and *iratus*, whereas he introduces Aristophanes under the description only of *prægrandis senex*, which is interpreted to refer to the superior gravity and dignity of his stile.

Horace, in the fourth satire of his first book, instances these three poets by pre-eminence from amongst all the writers of the old comedy.

*Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poeta,
Atque alii, quorum comædia prisca virorum est,
Si quis erat dignus describi, quod malus ac fur,
Quod mæchus foret, aut sicarius, aut aliqui
Famosus, multâ cum libertate notabant.*

*The comic poets, in its earliest age,
Who form'd the manners of the Grecian stage,
Was there a villain, who might justly claim
A better right of being damn'd to fame,
Rake, cut-throat, thief, whatever was his crime,
They freely stigmatiz'd the wretch in rhyme.*

(FRANCIS.)

It appears by this quotation, that Horace does not consider their comedy in the same light with Aristotle, as if they represented human nature in worse colours than it deserved.

Quintilian expressly says, that these are the chief writers of the old comedy—*Plures ejus auctores;*

*auſtores; Ariſtophanes tamen et Eupolis, Cratinuſque præcipui:—*And he recommends the old Greek comedy, and theſe authors in particular, as the beſt model (Homer only excepted) for his orator to form himſelf upon; inasmuch as it is there only he will find the Attic ſtile in its purity and perfection; and though the old comedy, as he obſerves, is chiefly occupied in wit and ſarcaſm for the purpoſe of chaſtiſing vice, yet it has many excellences of a more general ſort: It is energetic, elegant, and full of graces; ſo that if Homer alone (who like his own Achilles has the privilege of being always put above compariſon) be excepted, no other ſchool for oratory can come in competition with this.

C R A T I N U S.

Cratinus was the ſon of Callimedes an Athenian; we have the titles of at leaſt thirty comedies of his writing, ſo that Suidas is miſtaken in aſcribing to him only twenty-one; he was a poet of ſtrong imagination, and a florid lively ſtile; he carried away no leſs than nine prizes, which is a large proportion of ſucceſs, compared with others, who rank amongſt the higheſt both in the comic and tragic line. A ſecond edict came out in his time for reſtraining the

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licentiousness of the stage in point of personality, and Cratinus, in common with the rest of his contemporaries, found himself obliged to divert his satire from the living to the dead: Sarcasms were now levelled at men's productions, not at their persons; the tragic authors felt the chief weight of the attack, though even Homer did not escape, as may be gathered from *The Ulysses* of Cratinus, in which he parodies and ridicules the *Odyssy*.

Cratinus lived to an extreme old age, though according to the loose morals of the Greeks he indulged his passions both natural and unnatural without restraint: He carried his love of wine to such excess, that he got the name of *Φιλοπότης*, launching out in praise of drinking, and rallying all sobriety out of countenance, asserting that no author can be good for any thing, who does not love his bottle, and that dramatic poets in particular ought to drink hard, as a duty due to Bacchus for his peculiar patronage and protection of the stage. Horace, who was not very averse from his doctrine, quotes his authority in the first lines of an epistle to Mæcenas.

*Prisco si credis, Mæcenas docte, Cratino,
Nulla placere diu nec vivere carmina possunt,
Quæ scribuntur aquæ potoribus.*

O learn'd

O learn'd Mæcenas, hear Cratinus speak,
 And take this maxim from the gay old Greek ;
 No verse shall please, or lasting honours gain,
 Which coldly flows from water-drinker's brain.

As for the love of wine, it seems to have stood in the place of a merit with the Greeks ; but Cratinus's excess was attended in his old age with some marks of weakness and want of retention, incidental to an exhausted constitution, which gave a handle to Aristophanes, who was a younger man (and not much more abstemious) to bring his old competitor on the stage, and hold him up to ridicule for this infirmity. The charge was unmanly, and roused the aged veteran to return the attack : Cratinus, then nearly approaching to an hundred, had left off writing, but he was not yet superannuated, and lived to compleat a comedy, which he appositely entitled *The Flaggon*. In the plot of this piece he feigns himself married to Comedy, whom he personifies, and represents the lady in disgust with her husband for his unconjugal neglect, on which account she states her charge, and roundly sues for an actual divorce : Upon this hearing, certain friends and advocates are introduced on the scene in behalf of the party accused, who make suit to the dame to stay her proceedings, and not be over-hasty

hasty in throwing off an old spouse; but on the contrary recommend to her to enter calmly into an amicable discussion of her grievances: To this proposal she at length accedes, and this gives occasion to take up the charge of Aristophanes, accusing the old bard of drunkenness and the concomitant circumstances, which had been published with so much ill-nature to make him ridiculous at the end of life. Then follows a very pleasant refutation of all these libels, by which he contrives to turn the laugh against Aristophanes, and so concludes the comedy. One feels a satisfaction even at this distance of ages to know, that the old poet bore away the prize with this very comedy, and soon after expired in the arms of victory at the age of ninety-seven, in the first year of Olymp. LXXXIX,

The Athenians gave him a monument, and an epitaph, in which they omit all mention of his fine talents, and record nothing but his drunkenness. He spared no man when living, and even death itself could not protect him from retaliation.

“Θανόντος ἀνδρὸς παρ’ ἀπόλλοται χάρις.”
(STESICHOUS.)

*The evil that he did liv'd after him,
The good was all interr'd with his bones.*

(SHAKESPEARE.)

There is scarce a fragment of this poet, once so great a favourite, that is now to be found; the very few scraps of sentences remaining are too imperfect to merit a translation: One little spark of his genius however will be seen in the following epigrammatic turn of thought upon the loss of a statue, which being the workmanship of Dædalus, he supposes to have made use of its privilege, and escaped from its pedestal.

" My statue's gone! By Dædalus 'twas made,

" It is not stolen therefore; it has stray'd."

EUPOLIS.

Eupolis became a very popular author some years before the death of Cratinus: The bold strong spirit of his satire recommended him to the public more than the beauties and graces of his style, which he was not studious to polish. He attacked the most obnoxious and profligate characters in Athens, without any regard to his personal safety; to expose the cheat, and ridicule the impostor was the glory of his muse, and neither the terrors of the magistracy, nor the mysteries of superstition could

could divert him from it. He wrote two comedies professedly against Autolycus the Areopagite, whose misbehaviour in the Chæronensian war had made him infamous, and he called them after his name *The first and second Autolycus*. In his famous comedy called *The Bapta* he inveighs against the effeminate turpitude of his countrymen, whom he exhibits dancing after the manner of the lascivious priests of Cotytto (viz. *the Bapta*) in the habits and fashion of female minstrels.

*Talia secretâ coluerunt orgia tedâ
Cecropiam soliti Bapta lassare Cotytto.*

(JUVEN.)

The prevailing account of his death is, that the persons, whom he had satirized in this play of the *Bapta*, suborned certain assassins to throw him into the sea, as he was passing the Hellespont with the Athenian forces then on an expedition against the Lacedæmonians; and several authorities impute this revengeful deed to Alcibiades, who had been severely handled in that piece; but Cicero in his first epistle of the sixth book to Atticus speaks of this report as a vulgar error, and quotes Eratosthenes for the fact of Eupolis having written certain comedies after the time, when the event of his death is dated

—redarguit

—*redarguit Eratoſthenem, aſſert enim quas ille poſt id tempus fabulas docuerit.*

Pauſanias tells us, that his tomb was erected upon the banks of the *Alſopus* in Sicyonia, and as it is not likely this honour ſhould be paid to his memory by the Sicyonians, he being an Athenian born, unleſs he had died in their country, the authority of Pauſanias ſeems to confirm the account of Eratoſthenes, and diſcredit the fable of his being thrown into the Helſpont.

In his comedy called *The People*, by the fiction of the ſcene he raiſes the ſhades of their departed orators and demagogues from the dead; and when Pericles, laſt of the troop, ariſes, the poet demands, “Who it is that up-
“*ſpurs?*” The queſtion being answered, and the ſpirit of Pericles diſmiſſed, he pronounces his euecnium—“That he was pre-eminent as
“an orator, for man never ſpoke as he ſpoke:
“When he ſtarted like a courſer in the race,
“he threw all competitors out of ſight, ſo rapid
“was the torrent of his eloquence; but with
“that rapidity there flowed ſuch ſweetneſs and
“perſuaſion from his lips, that He alone of all
“orators ſtruck a ſting into the very ſouls of
“his hearers, and left it there to remain for
“ever.”

I think

I think it probable the following fragment has been the opening speech of this very comedy; for in it he addresses *the People*, and complains of the preference they are apt to bestow upon foreigners, to the neglect of their own countrymen — “Receiving every thing
“with favour that falls from their lips, and
“applauding them as oracles of human wisdom; whereas, if any one of your own
“countrymen addresses you (though in no
“respect their inferior) you look down upon
“him with contempt; nay, you are ready to
“pronounce that the man is in his dotage;
“a fool who never had senses, or a madman
“who has lost them—but hark ye, gentlemen!
“let me have a word with you at starting;
“let me prevail with you to revoke these unjust proceedings, and give a fellow-citizen
“and your humble servant a fair hearing and
“impartial judgment.”

I suspect this to be a sly blow at Aristophanes, who was not an Athenian born, and perhaps at this time had not his adoption. He proceeds to lament the state of public affairs, and the degeneracy of the times; for in the old comedy it was usual for the poet to harangue the theatre, either in the opening of the piece, or at any convenient interval between the scenes,

sometimes in his own person, sometimes by the mouth of the chorus. We cannot wonder if such sentiments as the following, delivered from the stage, should render Eupolis obnoxious to men in power.

Address to the Audience by Eupolis.

“ Of many things, which offer themselves
 “ to my consideration, I cannot find words to
 “ speak, so penetrated am I with affliction,
 “ when I turn my thoughts to the condition
 “ of the commonwealth; for you must be
 “ conscious, O citizens, it was not so admi-
 “ nistered in times past, when men of high
 “ birth, men, whose rank, fortune and merit
 “ gave them a consideration in the state, filled
 “ the first offices of government: To such we
 “ deferred, as to the deities themselves; for
 “ they merited our respect, and under their
 “ protection we enjoyed security: Now we
 “ have no other guide in our election but blind
 “ ignoble chance, and on whatsoever head it
 “ falls, though he be the worst and meanest of
 “ mankind, he starts up a great man at once,
 “ and is installed with all proper solemnity a
 “ rogue in state.”

Here the poet speaks out of the rostrum
 rather

rather than from the stage: This is plain bold language; and tempts me to call our countryman Ben Jonson on the scene, who was deep in all these remnants of the old Greek poets, and frequently talks the very language of the Athenian theatre.

Asper, in character of *Presenter* of the play, thus opens the comedy of *Every Man out of his Humour*.

Address to the Audience by B. Jonson.

Away!

*Who is so patient of this impious world,
That he can check his spirit, or rein his tongue?—
Who can behold such prodigies as these,
And have his lips seal'd up? Not I; my soul
Was never ground into such oily colours,
To flatter vice and dawb iniquity:
But with an armed and resolved hand
I'll strip the ragged follies of the time,
Naked as at their birth——*

*I fear no mood stamp'd in a private brow,
When I am pleas'd to unmask a public vice.
I fear no strumpet's drugs, nor ruffian's stab,
Should I detect their hateful luxuries;
No broker's, usurer's, or lawyer's gripe,
Were I dispos'd to say, They're all corrupt.
I fear no courtier's frown, should I applaud
The easy flexure of his supple ham.
Yet! these are so innate and popular,*

*That drunken custom would not shame to laugh
In scorn at him, that should not dare to tax them.
&c. &c.*

This is the very spirit of the old Greek comedy, speaking through the organs of our English Aristophanes, and old Ben fills the character of the *prægrandis senex*, as well as he for whom it was designed. It is the *Comædia*, *vocem tollens*, and asserting her determination to keep up her rights according to antient custom of her founders — *Siquis erat dignus describi*. — In the third year of Olymp. LXXXIX. which was two years after the decease of Cratinus, Eupolis acted his comedy called *The Flatterers*, Alcæus being archon. I cannot doubt but the following is a fragment of this comedy; it is a part of the speech of a parasite, and runs over a few of the arts, by which he gulls the rich boobies that fall in his way.

The Parasite of Eupolis,

- “ Mark now, and learn of me the thriving arts,
- “ By which we parasites contrive to live :
- “ Fine rogues we are, my friend (of that be sure)
- “ And daintily we gull mankind.—Observe !
- “ First I provide myself a nimble thing
- “ To be my page, a varlet of all crafts ;
- “ Next

" Next two new suits for feasts and gala-days,
 " Which I promote by turns, when I walk forth
 " To sun myself upon the public square :
 " There if perchance I spy some rich dull knave,
 " Strait I accost him, do him reverence,
 " And, saunt'ring up and down, with idle chat
 " Hold him awhile in play ; at every word,
 " Which his wife worship utters, I stop short
 " And bless myself for wonder ; if he ventures
 " On some vile joke, I blow it to the skies,
 " And hold my sides for laughter—Then to supper
 " With others of our brotherhood to mess
 " In some night-cellar on our barley cakes,
 " And club inventions for the next day's shift."

The Parasite of Ben Jonson.

MOSCA.

——— Ob ! your parasite
 Is a most precious thing, dropt from above,
 Not bred 'mongst clods and clot-poles here on earth.
 I muse the mystery was not made a science,
 It is so liberally profest. Almost
 All the wise world is little else in nature
 But parasites and sub-parasites. And yet
 I mean not those, that have your bare town-art,
 To know who's fit to feed them ; have no house,
 No family, no care, and therefore mould
 Tales for men's ears, to bait that sense—nor those,
 With their court dog-tricks, that can fawn and steer,
 Make their revenue out of legs and faces,
 Ecce, My Lord, and lick away a moth ;

*But your fine elegant raftal, that can rise,
 And sloop almost together like an arrow,
 Shoot thro' the air as nimbly as a star,
 Turn short as doth a swallow, and be here,
 And there, and here, and yonder all at once;
 Present to any humour, all occasion,
 And change a wiser swifter than a thought;
 This is the creature had the art born with him.*

Lucian's *Parasite*, which is a masterpiece of character and comic writing, and Horace's dialogue between Tiresias and Ulysses (which is the fifth satire of the second book) might perhaps be traced in passages of this comedy of Eupolis, if we had it entire.

Eupolis in his *Lacedæmonians* attacks both the public and private character of Cimon, charging him with improper partiality for the Lacedæmonians, with drunkenness, and even with an incestuous commerce with his own sister Pnyce: Plutarch takes notice of this attack, and says it had a great effect in stirring up the populace against this celebrated commander.

He wrote his comedy, intitled *Marica*, against the orator *Hyperbolus*, whom Thucydides mentions to have been banished by Ostracism.

We

We have the titles of upwards of twenty plays of this author's composition.

Nº LXXV.

ARISTOPHANES.

*Ut templum charitès, quod non labatur, haberent,
invenère virum pectus, Aristophanes.*

(JOS. SCALIGER EX PLATONE.)

THIS is an eulogy the more honourable to Aristophanes, as it fell from Plato, the disciple of Socrates. If I were to collect all the testimonies, that are scattered through the works of the learned in behalf of the author we are now about to review, I should fill my pages with panegyric; but this I am the less concerned to do, as the reader has a part of him in possession, which as it is near a fourth of the whole man, he has more than the foot by which to measure this Hercules.

Both the parentage and birth-place of Aristophanes are doubtful: He was an adopted, not a natural, citizen of Athens, and I incline to think he was the son of Philippus, a native

of Ægina, where our poet had some patrimony. He was in person very tall, bony and robust, and we have his own authority for his baldness; but whether this was as disgraceful at Athens, as it was amongst the Romans, I have not been anxious to enquire. He was in private life of a free, open and companionable temper, and his company was sought after by the greatest characters of the age with all possible avidity: Plato, and even Socrates, shared many social hours with him; he was much the most popular character in Athens, as the great demagogue Cleon experienced to his cost, not to mention Socrates himself: Every honour that could be paid to a poet was publicly bestowed upon Aristophanes by the Athenian people; nor did they confine their rewards to honorary prizes only, but decreed him fines and pecuniary confiscations from those, who ventured to attack him with suits and prosecutions: Dionysius of Syracuse in vain made overtures to him of the most flattering sort, at the time when Æschines and Aristippus, Socratic philosophers, were retained in his court with so much infamy to their private characters, and when even Plato himself had solicited his notice by three several visits to Syracuse, where he had not the good fortune to render himself
 very

very agreeable. The fame of Aristophanes had reached to the court of Persia, and his praises were there sounded by the great king himself, who considered him not only as the first poet, but as the most conspicuous personage at Athens. I do not find him marked with any other immorality, than that of intemperance with regard to wine, the fashionable excess of the time, and in some degree a kind of prerogative of his profession, a *licentia poetica*: Athenæus the Deipnosophist says he was drunk when he composed, but this is a charge that will not pass upon any man who is sober; and if we rejected it from Sophocles in the case of Æschylus, we shall not receive it but with contempt from such an accuser as Athenæus. He was not happy in his domestic connections, for he naturally declares that *he was ashamed of his wife*—Τὴν γυναῖκα δ' αἰσχύνουμαι—and as for his two sons, Philippus and Ararotes, they did him as little credit, and he considered them accordingly. He was blest with a good constitution, and lived to turn above seventy years, though the date of his death is not precisely laid down.

Though he was resolute in opposing himself to the torrent of vice and corruption, which overspread the manners of his country, yet he
was

was far more temperate in his personal invective than his contemporaries. He was too sensitive in his nature to undertake the performance of his own parts in person, which was general with all the comic poets of his time; and he stood their raillery for not venturing to tread the stage as they did. Amipias and Aristonymus, both rival authors, charged him with availing himself of the talents of other people from consciousness of his own insufficiency: Their raillery could not draw him out, till his favourite actor Callistratus declined undertaking the part of Cleon in his personal comedy of *The Knights*, dreading the resentment of that powerful dæmagogue, who was as unforgiving as he was imperious: In this dilemma Aristophanes conquered his repugnance, and determined upon presenting himself on the stage for the first time in his life: He dressed himself in the character of this formidable tribune; and having coloured his face with vermilion up to the hue of the brutal person he was to resemble, he entered on the part in such a stile of energy, and with such natural expression, that the effect was irresistible; and the proud factious Cleon was stript of his popularity, and sentenced in a fine of five talents by the knight's decrec, as damages for the charge

charge he had preferred against the author touching his right of citizenship, which was awarded and secured to him by the same instrument.

Such was Aristophanes in person, manners and character: As a poet I might refer the learned reader to his works, which speak so ably for themselves; They are not only valuable as his remains, but when we consider them as the only remains, which give us any complete specimens of the Greek comedy, they become inestimable through the misfortunes of all the rest. We receive them as treasures thrown up from a wreck, or more properly as one passenger escaped out of a fleet, whose narrative we listen to with the more eagerness and curiosity, because it is from this alone we can gain intelligence of the nature of the expedition, the quality of the armament, and the characters and talents of the commanders, who have perished and gone down into the abyss together.

The comedies of Aristophanes are universally esteemed to be the standard of Attic writing in its greatest purity; if any man would wish to know the language as it was spoken by Pericles, he must seek it in the scenes of Aristophanes, where he is not using a foreign or affected diction, for the purpose of accommodating it to

some particular or extravagant character. The ancient authors, both Greek and Roman, who had all the productions of the Athenian stage before them, speak of him with such rapture and admiration, as to give him a decided preference before all other comic poets, with an exception as I believe of Plutarch only, who brings him into comparison with Menander, and after discussing their different pretensions decides peremptorily for Menander: This criticism of Plutarch's I shall reserve for future consideration; and when I said that he is single in his preference of Menander, perhaps I ought to recal the expression, as that poet has his admirers, but none that I know of, who have deliberately given judgment in his favour upon a critical comparison with Aristophanes, except Plutarch above mentioned.

: The drama of Aristophanes is of a mixed species; sometimes personal, at other times inclining to parody, according to the character of the middle comedy: He varies and accommodates his stile to his subject and the speakers on the scene; on some occasions it is elevated, grave, sublime and polished to a wonderful degree of brilliancy and beauty; on others it sinks and descends into humble dialogue, provincial rusticity, coarse naked obscenity, and
even

even puns and quibbles : The versatility of his genius is admirable ; for he gives us every rank and description of men in his scenes, and in every one is strictly characteristic. In some passages, and frequently in his chorusses, he starts out of the ordinary province of comedy into the loftiest flights of poetry, and in these I doubt if Æschylus or Pindar have surpassed him : In sentiment and good sense he is not inferior to Euripides, and in the acuteness of his criticisms equalled by none : In the general purport of his moral he seldom, if ever, fails ; but he works occasionally with unclean tools, and, like Juvenal in the lower ages, chastises vice by an open exposure of its turpitude, offending the ear, whilst he aims to mend the heart. This habit of plain speaking was the fashion of the times he wrote in, and the audience demanded and would have it ; that he may be studied by the purest readers we should conclude, when we are told he was the pillow companion of a Christian saint, as the well-known anecdote of Chrysostom will testify. If we cannot entirely defend the indelicacy of his muse, we cannot deny but that a great share of the blame rests with the spectators : A dramatic poet cannot model his audience, but in a certain degree must of necessity con-

form

form to their taste and humour: It can be proved that Aristophanes himself laments the hard task imposed upon him of gratifying the public at the expence of decency; but with the example of the poet Cratinus before his eyes, who was driven from the stage because he scrupled to amuse the public ear with tawdry jests, it is not to be wondered at, if an author, emulous of applause, should fall in with the wishes of the theatre, unbecoming as they were: Let me add in further palliation of this fault, that he never puts obscenity but in the mouths of obscene characters, and so applies it as to give his hearers a disgust for such unseemly habits. Morality I confess deserves a purer vehicle, yet I contend that his purpose was honest, and I dare believe went farther towards reforming the loose Athenians, than all the indecisive positions of the philosophers, who being enlisted into sects and factions scarce agreed in any one point of common morality.

This part of his defence would have been very easily handled a century or two ago; Ben Jonson for instance could have helped his argument out with his own example, if occasion had required; but the task falls very heavy upon an advocate in this age, which is of purer ears than to listen to obscenity; and though

though my particular difficulties have thereby been encreased, I shall never repine under the weight of any burthen, which the merit of my contemporaries lays upon me.

His wit is of various kinds; much is of a general and permanent stamp; much is local, personal and untransferable to posterity: No author still retains so many brilliant passages, yet none has suffered such injury by the depredations of time: Of his powers in ridicule and humour, whether of character or dialogue, there might be no end to instances: If Plautus gives us the model of Epicharmus, he does not equal him; and if Terence translates Menander, his original does not approach him in these particulars: I doubt if the sum total of wit and humour in all their stage-lacqueys would together balance the single character of *Cario* in the *Plutus*. His satire, whether levelled against the vices and follies of the people at large, against the corruption of the dæmagogues, the turpitude and chicanery of the philosophers, or the arrogant self-sufficiency of the tragic poets, cuts with an edge that penetrates the character, and leaves no shelter for either ignorance or criminality.

Aristophanes was author of above sixty comedies, though they are erroneously stated under
that

that amount. *The Plutus* now in our hands (which is the second he wrote of that title) has been twice published in our language by two different translators; one of these I have seen, which was jointly executed by the celebrated Henry Fielding and the Rev. Mr. Young: There is an English translation, as I am told, of *The Clouds*, but this has never been in my hands, and also a very late one of *The Frogs* in metre, which I have perused. Much praise is due to the labours of learned men, who thus endeavour to make his wit current amongst us; and every man who knows the difficulties of their task, will find his candour strongly called upon to excuse any errors or inequalities, that may appear in their performances.

N^o LXXVI.

I SAID in my former Paper that Plutarch had made a comparison between Aristophanes and Menander, and given his decided judgment for the latter. It might well be expected, that a Greek of the lower ages, living in the time of Trajan, and in court-favour with that emperor, should prefer a polished elegant author like Menander to one so bold, personal and sarcastic as the poet he compares with him. Horace even in the time of Augustus had begun to decry the *Plautinos Sales*, and the manners were much more refined in Plutarch's time than in his. As we can take little estimate of Menander from the fragments only of his comedies which now remain, we cannot see what general reasons Plutarch, or any other critic of his time, might have for preferring him; but as far as he has entered into strictures and objections in his examination of Aristophanes, so far we can follow him; this part at least of his criticism is still open to be controverted, and if it shall appear that he has condemned one party without reason, it may be presumed he has preferred the other without justice.

Plutarch asserts that Aristophanes is a punster, a quibbler upon words, and ridiculously given to parody. It is unfortunate for this charge that he follows it up with quotations, in every one of which Aristophanes is not only to be defended but applauded; he could not have selected passages less to the purpose; and the accusation has accordingly been turned against him by Frischlinus and other advocates of the poet.

He arraigns the stile of Aristophanes on account of its inequalities and variations, observing that it is sometimes high and sometimes low, now turgid and inflated, now grovelling and depressed — as if he had not been aware that the great variety of characters, which his comedy exhibits, naturally demands as great a variety of stile: He applauds Menander for the uniform and equal tenor of his stile, not seeming to recollect that his comedy on the contrary had one uniform complexion, contained no chorusses and introduced no living characters; whereas Aristophanes, according to the spirit of the old comedy, makes use of chorusses, many of which are of so fanciful and imaginary a nature, that it is necessary to employ all the powers of poetry in their display, and in some cases even to create a new stile

stile (and almost language) for the occasion : He also introduces gods, heroes, poets, orators, philosophers, ambassadors, priests on his scene ; some of these professedly demand a swelling tragic pomp of words, for instance Æschylus, Sophocles and Euripides : In short, the very excellence of Aristophanes is discrimination of stile and character. Should Socrates and a slave speak in the same phrase ? Should Lamachus (a mere *miles gloriosus*) talk in the tone of a beggarly Megarensian pedlar ? Certainly not ; nor is there any need to dwell longer on this criticism of Plutarch's, in which the ingenious author has shewn little of his usual candour or judgment. That he should be prepossessed in favour of the new comedy is very natural ; elegant and moral fictions are both more pleasing and more proper subjects for the drama, than bold and coarse truths and living realities : The even suavity of Menander's stile might be more to his taste than the irregular sublimity of Aristophanes's ; but when I see him manage the argument in a manner so much below his usual sagacity, I cannot help suspecting there might be some other besides general prejudice in his mind against Aristophanes, and I make no doubt he had fostered strong resentments against him for his attacks upon Socrates ;

I also see some grounds for believing that he had been opposed by Pliny in his partiality for Menander, whom that author calls *omnis luxurie interpres*; a charge which was resented by Plutarch, who nevertheless was compelled to admit it: It is not improbable therefore that this might have given some occasion to him for entering into a more formal comparison between the two authors, and for publishing his strictures upon Aristophanes. Upon looking over the titles of the comedies of the last-named author, which are lost, I find one intitled *Bæotia*, which play was translated and brought upon the Roman stage by Plautus, as it is generally thought, though we are told that M. Varro gave it to one Aquilius; be this as it may, the comedy was produced by one or the other, and there is a fragment of it in proof, which will be found in Pareus's edition of Plautus: Here is fresh reason for Plutarch (who was a Bæotian) to take up a resentment against Aristophanes; and, if it were a subject worth following, I could shew that Plutarch's national prejudices were uncommonly strong: The comedy indeed is not in existence, both original and translation being perished; but we can easily believe that Bæotia did not escape out of Aristophanes's hands without a pretty smart flagellation; and this was the more galling

galling to Plutarch, because it was naturalized on the Roman stage, and, if it was still in representation, might give a handle to the wits of the time for a run upon his native country. But I perceive my zeal is carrying me into an unprofitable research, and I proceed with my subject.

Aristophanes has sometimes been reproached for his attacks upon Euripides; but this author was a fair subject for satire in his literary character, and, though he was the friend of Socrates, his private morals were no less open to reproof. The voice of the heathen world has been so loud in the praise of Socrates; he is so decidedly the hero of all the Ciceros and declaimers upon morality, that even now, after so many centuries of Christianity, it is with a kind of superstitious reverence we approach his character. His contemporaries, who saw him in the nearest light, treat him with the least respect: Aristophanes (as Ben Jonson expresses it) *hoisted him up with a pulley, and made him play the philosopher in a basket; measure how many foot a flea could skip geometrically by a just scale, and edify the people from the engine.*—Time and prejudice have since cast a veil before him, that it would be a hardy deed to attempt to withdraw.

This attack of Aristophanes has doomed him

to almost universal detestation; the praise we give him is no more than his superior genius extorts, and it is paid grudgingly, like a tax, without cordiality or good-will: We admire him for his bold attacks upon Cleon, and we can find some palliation for his strictures upon Euripides; the languid affectation of the poet, and the turbulent ferocity of the dæmagogue, justify the satirist; but when he assaults the sacred character of Socrates, when he arraigns the unspotted purity of the great master of morality, it is no longer satire, it is sacrilege. But is all this to pass without one word for the poet? Was he given up by his contemporaries for this atrocious act? was he given up by the friends and disciples of Socrates? By none; not even by Plato himself, who on the contrary caressed, admired and extolled him both in verse and prose; he adopted his sentiments on the subject of *Love*, and engrafted them into his own *Symposium*: He applauded him to Dionysius of Syracuse, and put his comedies into his hands as the only pure and perfect model of Attic elegance: The tyrant read them, admired them and even rehearsed them by heart; nay he did more, he turned poet himself, and wrote a play for the Athenian stage, which of course was honoured with a prize. And now why should we

we be more angry than Plato was? What have we discovered, which he did not know, that we should take the matter up so high? We have discovered that Aristophanes took a bribe of Melitus and his faction to attack Socrates, and pave the way for their criminal charge, by which he suffered; and this we take upon credit from Ælian's insinuations in an article of his *Various History*, which for its authority in this case is about as good an evidence, as any story out of the *Incredibilia of Palæphatus Heraclitus*. Ælian however does not hardily advance this as a fact, but hooks it in by way of question—*Where is the absurdity*, he asks, *of supposing that the poet, who was known to be needy, had taken a bribe?*—This is a mere insinuation, by which he tries the credulity of his readers: If they will believe it, so much the better for his purpose; if not, he has nothing else to offer; he has done his best to blacken the character of Aristophanes in this case, as he did in that of his intemperance: He has accused him of writing plays when he was drunk, and now he accuses him of taking a bribe for writing them: The man who believes the one, may take the other into the bargain; for his own part, the improbability stares him so fully in the face, that he immediately subjoins to his insinuation above quoted—*That for the*

truth of this, it was best known to *Aristophanes* himself.—This can never pass with any candid reader. As for the success of the attack, that he confesses was beyond all example; the comedy was applauded to the skies; never did any poet receive such honours from the public, as *Aristophanes* for this play of *The Clouds*.

As to the charge of the bribe, I need not observe, that if it was not an easy thing for any advocate of the poet to prove the negative in *Hadrian's* days, when *Ælian* threw it out, it cannot be less difficult now to do it, when more than two millenniums have interposed between the fact and our examination of it: And yet we know that *Aristophanes*, in a short time after the representation of his *Clouds*, brought this very *Melitus*, who is supposed to have suborned him by a bribe, before the audience, and exposed his vicious character with the most unsparing severity. If this is not proving a negative, it is as near it as circumstance and presumption can go.

But there is another part of *Ælian's* charge which can be more clearly disproved than the above, and this is the assertion he advances, that this attack upon *Socrates* from the stage was contrived by *Anytus* and *Melitus* as a prelude to their criminal accusation of him: This

Ælian

Ælian expressly asserts, adding that the faction were afraid of his popularity, and therefore set Aristophanes upon him to feel the pulse of the people, before they ventured to bring their public charge against him. Here he flatly confutes himself; for had this been the proving attack, what experiment could answer more completely, when even by his own account all Athens was in raptures with the poet, and the comedy went off with more general applause than any was ever known to receive? nay, more than this, Socrates himself according to Ælian's own account was present in the theatre, and stood up in view of the people all the while; yet in spite of his presence, in defiance of this bold appeal, the theatre rung with plaudits, and the philosopher only stood up to be a more conspicuous mark of raillery and contempt. Why then did not the faction seize the opportunity and second the blow? Could any thing answer more fully to their wishes? or rather, could any event turn out more beyond their expectation? From Ælian's account we are left to conclude that this was the case, and that this attack was literally a prelude to their charge; but this inference is alike disingenuous with all the rest, for we know from indubitable dates that *The Clouds* were acted at least *eighteen years* before

before the death of Socrates : It was in the first year of Olymp. I,XXXIX. when Isarchus was archon, that Aristophanes acted his first comedy of *The Clouds*, which was driven off the stage by Alcibiades and his party : In the year immediately following, when Aminias was archon, he brought out the second of that name, which is the comedy in question, now in our hands : These are authentic records ; take the earliest date for the death of Socrates, and it will not fall till the first year of Olymp. XCV. when Laches was archon ; the interval is as I state it ; a pretty reasonable time for such a plot to be ripening : And who now will give credit to Ælian and his *Various History* ?

Having taken some pains to prove what Aristophanes's motives were not, it now remains to shew what they were ; but this will be the subject of another Paper.

N^o LXXVII.

THE *Clouds* is a satirical and personal comedy, the moral of which is to shew how the sophistry of the schools may be employed as an instrument of fraud and evasion in matters of right and property; this is its principal object: But it touches also upon other points by the way, and humorously exposes certain new and chimerical notions about the relation of children to their parents, and of the influence of *The Clouds*, as superior to the superintending power of Jupiter.

Of its moral therefore, separately considered (comprehending the chief duties and relations of men, whether to the gods, to their parents or to society at large) there can be no doubt; its excellence and importance speak for themselves.

The comedy being written before the practice was restrained of bringing living characters on the stage, a school is here introduced, and the greatest philosopher of the time is represented in person on the stage: This philosopher is Socrates himself, and the school is the school of Socrates.

Socrates is made to advance the hypothesis of
The

The Clouds before mentioned; but it should be constantly kept in remembrance, that he lays down no doctrines, as principles of fraud or injustice: It is not the teacher who recommends, but his disciples who pervert his instructions to the evil purpose of defrauding and eluding their creditors: The like remark holds good in the case of the natural duty of children to their parents: The son in the play it is true strikes and beats his father on the stage, and he quotes the maxims of Socrates in justification; but he does not quote them as positive rules and injunctions for an act so atrocious; he only shews that sophistry may be turned to defend that, or any other thing equally violent and outrageous.

There are two lights in which Socrates is to be viewed; first, in his public character as a teacher; secondly, in his private one as a man. It is chiefly in the former of these that Aristophanes has attacked him; and (as I before observed) it is to expose the evil uses rather than the evil nature of his doctrines, that he brings his school upon the stage; for when the disciple is questioned about the studies which his master is employed in, he makes report of some frivolous and minute researches, which are introduced only for the purpose of raising a harmless

harmless laugh, and so far there can be no offence in this scene,

After all it must be allowed, that these seminaries of sophistry, which the state of Athens thought it necessary to put down by public edict, could not have been improper subjects for dramatic ridicule; for if the schools were found to be detrimental to the morals of youth, that the archons and their council, after due deliberation, resolved upon a general expulsion of all masters and teachers thereunto belonging, and effectually did expel them, surely the poet may be acquitted, when he satirizes those obnoxious parties, whom the laws of his country in a short time after cut off from the community.

There can be little doubt but this was a public measure founded in wisdom, if it were for no other reason, than that the Lacedæmonians never suffered a master of philosophy to open school within their realm and jurisdiction, holding them in abhorrence, and proscribing their academies as seminaries of evil manners, and tending to the corruption of youth: It is well known what peculiar care and attention were bestowed upon the education of the Spartan youth, and how much more moral this people was, who admitted no philosophers to settle amongst them, than their Athenian neighbours,

bours, in whose dissolute capital they swarmed. In fact, the enormity became too great to be redressed; the whole community was infected with the enthusiasm of these sectaries; and the liberties of Athens, which depended on the public virtue of her citizens, fell a sacrifice to the corruptions of false philosophy: The wiser Lacedæmonians saw the fatal error of their rivals, and availed themselves of its consequences; they rose upon the ruins of Athens, and it was the triumph of wisdom over wit: These philosophers were ingenious men, but execrable citizens; and when the raillery of the stage was turned against them, the weapons of ridicule could not be more laudably employed.

As for the school of Socrates in particular, though it may be a fashion to extol it, there is no reason to believe it was in better credit than any other; on the contrary, it was in such public disrepute on account of the infamous characters of many of his disciples, and of the disgraceful attachments he was known to have, that it was at one time deserted by every body except Æschines, the parasite of the tyrant Dionysius, and the most worthless man living: This Æschines, his sole and favourite disciple, was arraigned by the pleader Lysias, and convicted of the vilest frauds, and branded as a public cheat:

He

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He was a wretch, who employed the sophistry and cunning argumentation, which he learnt of his master, to the purpose only of evading his debts, contracted by the most profligate extravagancies: He afterwards went over to the school of Plato, and when Socrates was dead, had influence enough with Xantippe to obtain of her some dialogues from her husband's papers; which he published as his own, and set up for an author and preceptor in philosophy. It is very probable Aristophanes had in view the character of this very Æschines, when he brings his old man on the scene, consulting Socrates for sophistical evasions how to elude his creditors.

Another of the scholars of Socrates was *Simon* the sophist, a man whose rapacity became a proverb (*Σίμωνος ἀρπακτικώτερος*, *Simoni rapacior*). This Simon was such a plunderer of the public money, that Aristophanes in his strong manner says, *The very wolves run off upon the sight of Simon.*

The despicable *Cleonymus*, whose cowardice was as proverbial as Simon's rapacity, and the profligate *Theorus*, who buried himself in the stews at Corinth, were also fellow students under Socrates, and it is with just indignation against such execrable characters that Aristophanes exclaims

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claims—O Jupiter, if thy bolts are aimed at perjury, why do these wretches, of all most perjured, Simon, Cleonymus and Theorus, escape the stroke?

Ἐπερβάλλει τὰς ἐπιόρκας, πῶς δὴν' ἔχει Σίμων;
ἐνέπρησεν,
Οὐδὲ Κλεώνυμον, εἰδὲ Θεώρον; καὶ τοὶ σφύρα γ'
εἰς' ἐπιόρκοι.

Aristippus, the Cyrenaic founder, was a distinguished disciple of the Socratic school; a parasite also in the court of Dionysius, a buffoon and drunkard, the avowed opposer of every thing virtuous, a master and professor of immorality, who laid down institutes of sensuality and reduced it to a system.

Of Alcibiades I shall briefly speak, for the stories of Socrates's attachment to him are such as need not be enlarged upon; they obtained so generally, that he was vulgarly called Alcibiades's Silefius: When I glance at these reports in disfavour of a character, which probably stands so high in the opinion of the learned reader, I must hope for a candid interpretation of my motives for collecting these anecdotes, which I do not wish to apply to any other purpose than merely to shew that Aristophanes was not sin-

gular in his attack upon this celebrated philosopher; neither did this attack bear so hard against him, as many stories, then in general circulation, otherwise did: Great authorities have ascribed his attachment to Alcibiades to the most virtuous principle; common fame, or perhaps (more properly speaking) common defamation, turned it into a charge of the impurest nature: In like manner we find him ridiculed for his devotion to the noted Aspasia, in whose company he is said to have passed much of his time; and Athenæus quotes some passages of his dialogues with her, which he tells us were published by Herodicus, and which we must either totally reject, or allow him to have been subject to such private weaknesses and frailties, as were very unsuitable to his public character: What were the real motives for his frequent visits to Aspasia, as well as for his seeming attachment to the strumpet Theodote, must be left to conjecture; of the fact there is no room to doubt. He is stigmatized for his guilty connections in his youth with his preceptor Archelaus, and yet this charge (however improbable it may seem) rests upon the authority of Aristoxenus, a man of the most candid character, and whose credit stands high with all true critics. Herodicus the historian,

whom I have before mentioned, and who lived about three hundred and fifty years before the Christian æra, seems to have treated Socrates with the greatest severity, charging him with sitting up all night drinking and carousing with Agatho and others, whom when he had left drunk and asleep, he reeled into the Lyceum, more fit (in the words quoted from the relater) for the society of Homer's cannibals, than of those he found there : In this debauch it is pretended, that although Phedrus, Eryximachus and many other potent drinkers fled the company, Socrates sate to the last, swallowing drenches of wine out of enormous goblets of silver : He describes him sitting amongst lascivious revellers at a banquet, where dancing-girls and boys were exhibiting their indecent attitudes to the music of harpers and minstrels : He exposes this master of morality entering into a controversy with his scholar Critobulus upon the subject of male beauty ; and because Critobulus had ridiculed him for his ugliness, he asserts that Socrates challenged him to a naked exhibition, and that he actually exposed his unseemly person to a Pathic and a dancing-girl, the appointed umpires of the dispute ; the conqueror was to be rewarded with an embrace from each of these umpires, as the prize of superior

perior beauty, and the decision was of consequence given *ex absurdo* to the philosopher, in preference to one of the handsomest young men in Greece, and he enjoyed the prize annexed to the decree. If we can believe this anecdote to have been gravely related by an historian, who lived so near to him in point of time, we shall cease to wonder that Aristophanes had the whole theatre on his side, when such stories were in circulation against the character of Socrates.

As I have no other object in view but to offer what occurs to me in defence of Aristophanes, who appears to have been most unjustly accused of taking bribes for his attack upon Socrates, and of having paved the way for the cruel sentence by which he suffered death, I shall here conclude an invidious task, which my subject, not my choice, has laid upon me.

In our volume of Aristophanes, the comedies are not placed according to the order of time in which they were produced: There is reason to think that *The Acharnensians* was the first of its author; it was acted in the last year of Olymp. LXXXV. when the edict was reversed which prohibited the representation of comedies; and it is said that Aristophanes brought it out in the name of Callistratus the comedian.

In the last year of Olymp. LXXXVIII. he

produced his comedy of *The Knights*, in which he personally attacks the tribune Cleon.

In the first year of Olymp. LXXXIX. he produced his first comedy of *The Clouds*, and in the year following his second of that title, which is now in our hands, and ranks as third in the volume.

In the same year was acted his comedy of *The Wasps*, in which he satirizes the General Chares for his conduct in the unfortunate expedition to Sicily.

In the fourth year of Olymp. XC. we may place his comedy intitled *The Peace*. In the first of Olymp. XCI. *The Lyssistrata*; and in the second of the same Olympiad that of *The Birds*.

The Thesmophoriagustæ, or *Cerealia Celebrantes*, and *Concionatrices*, fall within the period of Olymp. XCII. before the death of Euripides, who is satirized in the former of these pieces.

The Frogs were performed in the last year of Olymp. XCIII. after the death of Euripides.

The Plutus, which completes the eleven comedies still remaining, and the last, to which he prefixed his own name, was produced in the fourth year of Olymp. XCVII.

It is generally supposed that we owe these remains of Aristophanes to St. Chrysostom, who happily

happily rescued this valuable, though small, portion of his favourite author from his more scrupulous Christian contemporaries, whose zeal was fatally too successful in destroying every other comic author, out of a very numerous collection, of which no one entire scene now remains.

N^o LXXVIII.

I SHALL now proceed to mention some other principal writers of the old comedy, of whose works, though once the favourites of the Athenian stage, few memorials survive, and these so small and imperfect, and withal so separated from each other (consisting only of short quotations in the scholiasts and grammarians) that it is a task to collect them, which nothing would compensate but the hope of being in some degree the instrument of saving from absolute extinction the names of authors once so illustrious.

AMIPSIAΣ was a contemporary of Aristophanes, and no mean rival; we have the titles of ten comedies of this author. In some of these

his satire was personal, but all of them seem by their titles to have been levelled against the reigning vices of his time, such as *The Gamesters*, *The Glutton*, *The Beard* (in which he inveighed against the hypocrisy and affectation of the priests and philosophers), *The Adulterers*, *The Sappho* (wherein the morals of the fair sex were exposed), *The Purse*, a second attack upon the gamesters, and *The Philosopher's Cloak*, in which it is understood he glanced pretty severely at Socrates.

PLATO was a comic poet, high in time and character; a collection of no less than forty titles of his comedies has been made by the learned Meursius, but very few fragments of these are remaining. Clemens asserts that Aristophanes and Plato were mutually charged of borrowing from each other, which in one sense makes greatly to the reputation of our poet. He is quoted by Plutarch in his Alcibiades, and very honourably mentioned by the famous Galen, by Athenæus, Clemens, Julius Pollux and Suidas. There is a fragment containing four lines and a half, upon a statue of Mercury cut by Dædalus, which has an epigrammatic neatness and point in it, that induced me to render it in rhyme;

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rhime : He addresses the statue, mistaking it for a living figure :

“ Hoa there ! who art thou ? Answer me—Art dumb ? ”
 “ —Warm from the hand of Dædalus I come ;
 “ My name Mercurius, and, as you may prove,
 “ A statue ; but his statues speak and move.”

Plato wrote a comedy personally against the General Cleophon, and called it by his name ; there are others of the same description in his catalogue, and some of the middle sort : There are a few lines upon the tomb of Themistocles, which have a turn of elegant and pathetic simplicity in them, that deserves a better translation than I can give,

“ *On the Tomb of Themistocles.*

“ By the sea’s margin, on the watery strand,
 “ Thy monument, Themistocles, shall stand :
 “ By this directed to thy native shore
 “ The merchant shall convey his freighted store ;
 “ And when our fleets are summon’d to the fight,
 “ Athens shall conquer with thy tomb in sight.”

The following fragment of a dialogue, between a father and a sophist, under whose tuition he had placed his son, probably belonged either to the comedy called *The Beard*, or *The Philosopher’s Cloak* : It is pretty much in the spirit of our old English drama.

M 4

“ FATHER.

" FATHER.

" Thou hast destroy'd the morals of my son,
 " And turn'd his mind, not so dispos'd, to vice,
 " Unholy pedagogue! With morning drams,
 " A filthy custom which he caught from thee,
 " Clean from his former practice, now he saps
 " His youthful vigour. Is it thus you school him?

" SOPHIST.

" And if I did, what harms him? Why complain you?
 " He does but follow what the wise prescribe,
 " The great voluptuous law of Epicurus,
 " Pleasure, the best of all good things on earth;
 " And how but thus can pleasure be obtain'd?

" FATHER.

" Virtue will give it him.

" SOPHIST.

" And what but virtue
 " Is our philosophy? When have you met
 " One of our sect flush'd and disguis'd with wine?
 " Or one, but one of those you tax so roundly,
 " On whom to fix a fault?

" FATHER.

" Not one, but all,
 " All who march forth with supercilious brow
 " High-arch'd with pride, beating the city-rounds,
 " Like constables in quest of rogues and out-laws,
 " To find that prodigy in human nature,
 " A wise and perfect man! What is your science
 " But kitchen-science? wisely to descant
 " Upon the choice bits of a flavoury carp,
 " And prove by logic that his *summum bonum*
 " Lies in his head; there you can lecture well,

" And,

“ And, whilst your grey beards wag, the gaping guest
 “ Sits wondering *with a foolish face of praise.*”

(PLATO, COM.)

CRATES, by birth an Athenian, was first an actor, and afterwards a writer of the old comedy; he performed the principal characters in Cratinus's plays, and was the great rival of Aristophanes's favourite actors Callistratus and Philonides; we have the titles of more than twenty comedies, and but four small fragments of this author: I have searched for his remains more diligently, from the circumstance of his having been so celebrated an actor; a profession which centers in itself more gifts of nature, education, art and study, than any other. His comedies are said to have been of a very gay and facetious cast; and the author of the *Prolegomena* to Aristophanes informs us, that he was the first who introduced a drunken character on the Athenian stage; to this anecdote I give credit, because no one could better know how entirely such an attempt depends upon the discretion and address of the actor, who has such a part in his keeping: It is plain the experiment succeeded, because even the tragedians exhibited such characters in succeeding times. Modern experience shews us, how subject such representations are to be outraged; the

the performer generally forgetting, or not knowing, that his own sobriety should keep the drunkenness he counterfeits within its proper bounds. Aristotle ascribes to Crates another innovation with respect to the iambic metre of the old comedy, which he made more free and apposite to familiar dialogue; this also corresponds with the natural and facetious character of his drama. I cannot say the four small fragments which I have collected bear that stamp; on the contrary, they are of a grave and sententious cast: One of them is an observation on the effects of poverty, which Horace has either literally translated, or struck upon the very same thoughts in the following passage:

*Non habet infelix paupertas durius in se
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.*

I find a short stricture upon the gluttony of the Thessalians; a remark upon the indecorum of inviting women to wedding suppers, and making riotous entertainments at a ceremony which modesty would recommend to pass in private, and within the respective family where it occurs.

The last fragment is a short but touching picture of old age, and the vanity of human wishes:

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wishes: I think the turn of thought and expression extremely beautiful.

“ ON OLD AGE.

“ These shrivell'd sinews and this bending frame,
 “ The workmanship of Time's strong hand proclaim;
 “ Skill'd to reverse whate'er the gods create,
 “ And make that crooked which they fashion straight.
 “ Hard choice for man, to die—or else to be
 “ That tottering, wretched, wrinkled thing you see:
 “ Age then we all prefer; for age we pray,
 “ And travel on to life's last ling'ring day;
 “ Then sinking slowly down from worse to worse,
 “ Find heav'n's extorted boon our greatest curse.”

(CRATES.)

PHRYNICHUS was a contemporary of Eupolis, and a writer of the old comedy; a dramatic poet of the first class in reputation as well as in time. He was an Athenian by birth, and must not be confounded with the tragic poet of that name. I find the titles of ten comedies of his writing; these are *The Ephialtes*; *The Beard*, (the same title with that of Plato); *Saturn*; *The Revellers*; *The Satyrs*; *The Tragedians*; *The Recluse*; *The Muses*; *The Priest*, and *The Weeding-Women*. We have no other guides but these titles to guess at the comedies themselves; we see however by some of them what subjects his satire pointed out to the spectators, in which the philosophers had their share as usual; and by certain fragments it appears,

appears, that Alcibiades was also treated with some personal severity.

PHERECRATES is the next author I shall notice, a poet famous in his time, and whose character as well as genius descends to us with the warmest testimonies of high authority. His style was of that sort, which has been proverbially dignified as *Most Attic*: He acquired such reputation by his poems as well as plays, that the metre he used was called by pre-eminence *the Pherecratian Metre*. He was no less excellent in his private character than in his poetical one; he was attached to Alexander of Macedon, and accompanied that great conqueror in his expeditions; he lived in intimacy with Plato at Athens, and in some of his comedies was engaged in warm competition with Crates, the actor and author, of whom I have already spoken. Suidas says he wrote seventeen comedies, and the titles of these are still extant: One of them, viz. *The Peasants*, is mentioned by Plato in his *Protagoras*: Clemens quotes a passage from his *Defersters* of great elegance, in which the gods are introduced making heavy complaints of the frauds put upon them by mankind in their sacrifices and oblations: This poet also has a personal stroke at the immoral character of Alcibiades.

Having quoted a passage from Crates on the subject of old age, I shall now select one from this author on the same; and if the reader is curious to observe how these celebrated rivals expressed themselves on a similar sentiment, he has an opportunity of making the comparison.

vide p. 171.

“ ON OLD AGE.

- “ Age is the heaviest burthen man can bear,
- “ Compound of disappointment, pain and care;
- “ For when the mind’s experience comes at length,
- “ It comes to mourn the body’s loss of strength:
- “ Resign’d to ignorance all our better days,
- “ Knowledge just ripens when the man decays;
- “ One ray of light the closing eye receives,
- “ And wisdom only takes what folly leaves.”

(PHERECRATES.)

Pherecrates intitled one of his comedies *The Tyranny*; it does not appear what particular object he had in view under this title, but from the following fragment he seems to have levelled some share of his satire against the fair sex—

- “ Remark how wisely antient art provides
- “ The broad-brimm’d cup with flat expanded sides;
- “ A cup contriv’d for man’s discreeter use,
- “ And sober potions of the generous juice:
- “ But woman’s more ambitious thirsty soul
- “ Soon long’d to revel in the plenteous bowl;
- “ Deep and capacious as the swelling hold
- “ Of some stout bark she shap’d the hollow mould,
- “ Then

" Then turning out a vessel like a tun,
 " Simp'ring exclaim'd—Observe! I drink but one."

(PHERECRATES.)

Athenæus has preserved a considerable fragment from this author, extracted from his comedy of *The Miners*, which I look upon to be as curious a specimen of the old comedy as I have met with. It is a very luxuriant description of the riches and abundance of some former times to which he alludes, strongly dashed with comic strokes of wild extravagance and hyperbole. These *Miners* were probably the chorus of the drama, which no doubt was of a satirical sort, and pointed at the luxuries of the rich. By the mention made of Plutus in the first line, we may suppose that these *Mines* were of gold, and probably the deity of that precious metal was one of the persons of the drama.

FROM THE MINERS OF PHERECRATES.

" The days of Plutus were the days of gold ;
 " The season of high feeding and good cheer :
 " Rivers of goodly beef and brewis ran
 " Boiling and bubbling thro' the steaming streets,
 " With islands of fat dumplings, cut in sops
 " And slippery gobbets, moulded into mouthfuls,
 " That dead men might have swallow'd ; floating tripes
 " And fleets of sausages in luscious morsels
 " Stuck to the banks like oysters : Here and there,

" For

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" For relishers, a salt-fish season'd high
 " Swamp down the savoury tide : When soon behold !
 " The portly gammon sailing in full state
 " Upon his smoaking platter heaves in sight,
 " Encompass'd with his bandoliers like guards,
 " And convoy'd by huge bowls of frumenty,
 " That with their generous odours scent the air."
 " —You stagger me to tell of these good days,
 " And yet to live with us on our hard fare,
 " When death's a deed as easy as to drink."
 " If your mouth waters now, what had it done,
 " Cou'd you have seen our delicate fine thrushes
 " Hot from the spit, with myrtle-berries cramm'd,
 " And larded well with celandine and parsley,
 " Bob at your hungry lips, crying—*Come eat me !*
 " Nor was this all ; for pendant over-head
 " The fairest choicest fruits in clusters hung ;
 " Girls too, young girls just budding into bloom,
 " Clad in transparent vests, stood near at hand
 " To serve us with fresh roses and full cups
 " Of rich and fragrant wine, of which one glass
 " No sooner was dispatch'd, than strait behold !
 " Two goblets, fresh and sparkling as the first,
 " Provok'd us to repeat the encreasing draught.
 " Away then with your ploughs, we need them not,
 " Your scythes, your sickles, and your pruning-hooks !
 " Away with all your trumpery at once !
 " Seed-time and harvest-home and vintage wakes—
 " Your holidays are nothing worth to us.
 " Our rivers roll with luxury, our vats
 " O'erflow with nectar, which providing Jove
 " Showers down by cataracts ; the very gutters
 " From our house-tops spout wine, vast forests wave
 " Whose

“ Whose very leaves drop fatness, smothering viands
 “ Like mountains rise—All nature’s one great feast.”

AMPHIS, the son of Amphicrates an Athenian, was a celebrated comic poet : We have the titles of one and twenty comedies, and he probably wrote many more : By these titles it appears that he wrote in the satirical vein of the old comedy, and I meet with a stroke at his contemporary Plato the philosopher. He has a play intitled *The Seven Chiefs against Thebes*, which is probably a parody upon Æschylus, and proves that he wrote after the personal drama was prohibited : There is another called *The Dicers* ; and by several scattered passages he appears to have exposed the persons of drunkards, gamesters, courtesans, parasites, and other vicious characters of his time, with great moral severity : There are also two comedies, intitled *Women’s Love* and *Women’s Tyranny*.

HERMIPPUS was a writer of the old comedy, and an Athenian. No less than forty comedies are given to this author by Suidas ; he attacks Pericles for his dissolute morals, and in one of his plays calls him *King of the Satyrs*, advising him to assume the proper attributes of his lascivious character : He was the son of Lyfides, and the brother of Myrtilus, a comic writer also.

HIPPARCHUS,

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HIPPARCHUS, PHILONIDES and THEOPOMPUS complete the list of poets of the old comedy. Philonides, before he became a votary of the muse, followed the trade of a fuller, and, if we are to take the word of Aristophanes, was a very silly vulgar fellow, illiterate to a proverb. Athenæus and Stobæus have however given us some short quotations, which by no means favour this account, and it is probable there was more satire than truth in Aristophanes's character of him. Theopompus is described as a man of excellent morals, and though he was long afflicted with a defluxion in his eyes, which put him from his studies, time has preserved the titles of twenty-four comedies of his composing: Very little remains upon record either of him or his works.

One short fragment of Philonides is all that remains of his works, and it is a specimen which convinces me that we must not always take the character of a poet from a contemporary wit, engaged in the same studies.

FRAGMENT OF PHILONIDES.

"Because I hold the laws in due respect,

"And fear to be unjust, am I a coward?

"Meek let me be to all the friends of truth,

"And only terrible amongst its foes."

----*Soli æquus virtuti atque ejus amicis.*

I now take leave of what is properly called *The Old Comedy*: In the further prosecution of this work (if that shall be permitted to me) it is my intention to review the writers of the *Middle*, and conclude with those of the *New Comedy*.

N° LXXIX.

PREJUDICE is so wide a word, that if we would have ourselves understood, we must always use some auxiliary term with it to define our meaning: Thus when we speak of national prejudices, prejudices of education, or religious prejudices, by compounding our expression we convey ideas very different from each other.

National prejudice is by some called a virtue, but the virtue of it consists only in the proper application and moderate degree of it. It must be confessed a happy attachment, which can reconcile the Laplander to his freezing snows, and the African to his scorching sun. There are some portions of the globe so partially endowed

dowed by Providence with climate and productions, that were it not for this prejudice to the *natale solum*, the greater part of the habitable world would be a scene of envy and repining. National predilection is in this sense a blessing, and perhaps a virtue; but if it operates otherwise, than in the best sense of its definition, it perverts the judgment, and in some cases vitiates the heart. It is an old saying, that *charity begins at home*, but this is no reason it should not go abroad: A man should live with the world as a citizen of the world; he may have a preference for the particular quarter, or square, or even alley in which he lives, but he should have a generous feeling for the welfare of the whole; and if in his rambles through this great city (the world) he may chance upon a man of a different habit, language or complexion from his own, still he is a fellow-citizen, a short sojourner in common with himself, subject to the same wants, infirmities and necessities, and one that has a brother's claim upon him for his charity, candour and relief. It were to be wished no traveller would leave his own country without these impressions, and it would be still better if all who live in it would adopt them; but as an *Observer* of mankind (let me speak it to the honour of my country-

men) I have very little to reproach them with on this account: It would be hard if a nation, more addicted to travel than any other in Europe, had not rubbed off this rust of the soul in their excursions and collisions; it would be an indelible reproach, if a people, so blest at home, were not benevolent abroad. Our ingenious neighbours the French are less agreeable guests than hosts: I am afraid their national prejudices reach a little beyond candour in most cases, and they are too apt to indulge a vanity, which does not become so enlightened a nation, by shutting their eyes against every light except their own; but I do a violence to my feelings, when I express myself unfavourably of a people, with whom we have long been implicated in the most honourable of all connections, the mutual pursuit of literary fame, and a glorious emulation in arts and sciences.

Prejudices of education are less dangerous than religious prejudices, less common than national ones, and more excusable than any; in general they are little else than ridiculous habits, which cannot obtain much in a country where public education prevails, and such as a commerce with the world can hardly fail to cure: They are characteristic of seraglio princes; the property of sequestered beings, who live in
celibacy

celibacy and retirement, contracted in childhood and confirmed by age: A man, who has passed his life on shipboard, will pace the length of his quarter-deck on the terrace before his house, were it a mile in length.

These are harmless peculiarities, but it is obvious to experience that prejudices of a very evil nature may be contracted by habits of education; and the very defective state of the police, which is suffered yet to go on without reform in and about our capital, furnishes too many examples of our fatal inattention to the morals of our infant poor: Amongst the many wretched culprits who suffer death by the law, how many are there, who, when standing at the bar to receive sentence of execution, might urge this plea in extenuation of their guilt!

“ This action, which you are pleased to term
 “ criminal, I have been taught to consider as
 “ meritorious: The arts of fraud and thieving,
 “ by which I gained my living, are arts in-
 “ stilled into me by my parents, habits wherein
 “ I was educated from my infancy, a trade to
 “ which I was regularly bred: If these are
 “ things not to be allowed of, and a violation
 “ of the laws, it behoved the laws to prevent
 “ them, rather than to punish them; for I can-
 “ not see the equity of putting me to death for

"actions, which, if your police had taken, any
 "charge of me in my infancy, I never had
 "committed. If you would secure yourselves
 "from receiving wrong, you should teach us
 "not to do wrong ; and this might easily be
 "effected, if you had any eye upon your parish
 "poor. For my part, I was born and bred in
 "the parish of Saint Giles ; my parents kept a
 "shop for the retail of gin, and old rags ;
 "christening I had none ; a church I never
 "entered, and no parish officer ever visited our
 "habitation : If he had done so, he would have
 "found a seminary of thieves and pick-pockets,
 "a magazine of stolen goods, a house of 'call
 "where nightly depredators met together to
 "compare accounts, and make merry over their
 "plunder : Amongst these and by these I was
 "educated ; I obeyed them as my masters, and
 "I looked up to them as my examples : I be-
 "lieved them to be great men ; I heard them
 "recount their actions with glory ; I saw them
 "die like heroes, and I attended their execu-
 "tions with triumph. It is now my turn to
 "suffer, and I hope I shall not prove myself
 "unworthy of the calling in which I have been
 "brought up : If there be any fault in my
 "conduct, the fault is yours ; for, being the
 "child of poverty, I was the son of the public :

" If

"If there be any honour, it is my own; for I have acted up to my instructions in all things, and faithfully fulfilled the purposes of my education."

I cannot excuse myself from touching upon one more prejudice, which may be called natural, or self-prejudice: Under correction of the *Dampers* I hope I may be allowed to say, that a certain portion of this is a good quickener in all constitutions; being seasonably applied, it acts like the spur in the wing of the ostrich, and keeps industry awake: Being of the nature of all volatiles and provocatives, the merit of it consists in the moderation and discretion which administer it: If a man rightly knows himself, he may be called wise; if he justly confides in himself, he may be accounted happy; but if he keeps both this knowledge and this confidence to himself, he will neither be less wise nor less happy for so doing: If there are any secrets, which a man ought to keep from his nearest friends, this is one of them. If there were no better reason why a man should not vaunt himself, but because it is robbing the poor mountebanks of their livelihood, methinks it would be reason enough: If he must think aloud upon such occasions, let him lock himself into his closet, and take it out in soliloquy: If

he likes the sound of his own praises there, and can reconcile himself to the belief of them, it will then be time enough to try their effect upon other people.

Ventidius is the modestest of all men; he blushes when he sees himself applauded in the public papers; he has a better reason for blushing than the world is aware of; he knows himself to be the author of what he reads.

It seems a matter pretty generally agreed between all tellers and hearers of stories, that one party shall work by the rule of addition, and the other by that of subtraction: In most narratives, where the relater is a party in the scene, I have remarked that the *says-I* has a decided advantage in a dialogue over the *says-he*; few people take an under-part in their own fable. There is a salvo, however, which some gentlemen make use of (but I cannot recommend it) of hooking in a word to their own advantage, with the preface of *I think I may say without vanity*—and after all, if it was not for the vanity of it, there would be no need to say it at all.

I knew a gentleman who possessed more real accomplishments, than fall to one man's lot in a thousand; he was an excellent painter, a fine musician, a good scholar, and more than all a
very

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very worthy man—but he could not ride: It so happened, that upon a morning's airing I detected him in the attempt of mounting on the back of a little pony, no taller than his whip, and as quiet as a lamb: Two stout fellows held the animal by the head, whilst my friend was performing a variety of very ingenious manœuvres for lodging himself upon the saddle by the aid of a stirrup, which nearly touched the ground: I am afraid I smiled, when I ought not so to have done, for it is certain it gave offence to my worthy friend, who soon after joined me on his pony, which he assured me was remarkably vicious, particularly at mounting; but that he had been giving him some proper discipline, which he doubted not would cure him of his evil tricks; “for—” you may think what you please,” adds he, “of my painting, or my music, or any other little talent you are pleased to credit me for; the only art, which I really pique myself upon—is the art of riding.”

N° LXXX.

TO THE OBSERVER.

SIR,

I AM a plain man without pretensions, and lead a retired life in the country: The sports of the season, a small farm, which I hold in my own hands, and a pretty good kitchen garden, in which I take amusement, with the help of a few English books, have hitherto made my life, though it is that of a bachelor, pass off with more than tolerable comfort. By this account of my time you will perceive that most of my enjoyments depend upon the weather; and though the wear-and-tear of age may have made me more sensible to the seasons than I have been, yet I cannot help thinking that our climate in England is as much altered for the worse, as my constitution may be. I do not pretend to reason upon natural causes, but speak upon observation only; for by an exact journal of my time (which I keep more for a check upon my actions than for any importance which appertains to them) I can find that I am obliged to my books for helping me through more rainy hours in the

course of years last past, than I have been accustomed to be; or indeed than I could wish; for you must know I never read, when I can amuse myself out of doors.

My studies are but trifling, for I am no scholar, but in bad weather and dark evenings they have served to fill up time; a very little discouragement however suffices to put me out of conceit with my books, and I have thoughts of laying them totally on the shelf, as soon as ever I can provide some harmless substitute in their place: This you see is not so easy for me to do, being a solitary man, and one that hates drinking, especially by myself; add to this that I smoke no tobacco, and have more reasons than I chuse to explain against engaging in the nuptial state: My housekeeper it is true is a decent conversible woman, and plays a good game at all-fours; and I had begun to fill up an hour in her company, till I was surpris'd unawares by a neighbour, who is a wag and has never ceased jeering me upon it ever since: I took next to making nets for my currant bushes, but alas! I have worked myself out of all employ and am got weary of the trade: I have thought of making fishing-rods; but I have a neighbour so tenacious of his trout, that I should only breed a quarrel, and fish in troubled waters, were I to attempt it. To
make

make short of my story, Sir, I have been obliged after many efforts to go back to my books, tho' I have lost all the little relish I had for them ever since I have been honoured with the visits of a learned gentleman, who is lately settled in my neighbourhood. He must be a prodigious scholar, for I believe in my conscience he knows every thing that ever was written, and every body that ever writes. He has taken a world of kind pains I must confess to set me right in a thousand things, that I was ignorant enough to be pleased with : He is a fine-spoken man, and in spite of my stupidity has the patience to convince me of the faults and blunders of every author in his turn : When he shews them to me, I see them as clear as day, and never take up the book again ; he has now gone pretty nearly through my whole nest of shelves, pointing out, as he proceeds, what I like a fool never saw before, nor ever should have seen but for him. I used to like a *Spectator* now and then, and generally sought out for *Clio*, which I was told were Mr. Addison's papers ; but I have been in a gross mistake, to lose my time with a man that cannot write common English ; for my friend has proved this to me out of a fine book, three times as big as the *Spectator* ; and, which is

more, this great book is made by a foreign gentleman, who writes and speaks clear another language from Mr. Addison; surely he must be a dunce indeed, who is to be taught his mother tongue by a stranger! I was apt to be tickled with some of our English poets, Dryden and Pope and Milton, and one Gray, that turns out to be a very contemptible fellow truly, for he has shewn me all their secret histories in print, written by a learned man greater than them all put together, and now I would not give a rush for one of them; I could find in my heart to send *Bill* and all his books to the devil. As for all the writers now living, my neighbour, who by the way has a hand in reviewing their works, assures me he can make nothing of them, and indeed I wonder that a man of his genius will have any thing to say to them. It was my custom to read a chapter or two in the Bible on a Sunday night; but there I am wrong again; I shall not enter upon the subject here, but it won't do, that I am convinced of, Sir; it positively will not do.

The reason of my writing to you at all is only to let you know, that I received a volume of your Observer by the coach; my friend has cast his eye over it, and I have returned it by the
waggon,

waggon, which he says is the fittest conveyance for waste paper.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

RUSTICUS.

I shall give no other answer to my correspondent but to lament his loss of so innocent a resource as reading, which I suspect his new acquirements will hardly compensate. I still think that half an hour passed with Mr. Addison over a *Spectator*, notwithstanding all his false grammar, or even with one of the poets, notwithstanding their infirmities, might be as well employed as in weaving nets for the currant-bushes, or playing at all-fours with his housekeeper. No man has a right to complain of the critic, whose sagacity discovers inaccuracies in a favourite author, and some readers may probably be edified by such discoveries; but the bulk of them, like my correspondent Rusticus, will get nothing but disgust by the information: Every man's work is fair game for the critic; but let the critic beware that his own production is not open to retaliation. As for our late ingenious biographer of the poets, when I compare his life of Savage with that of Gray, I must own he has exalted the low, and brought down the lofty;

with

with what justice he has done this the world must judge. On the part of our authors now living, whom the learned gentleman in the letter condemns in the lump, I have only this to observe, that the worse they fare now, the better they will succeed with posterity; for the critics love the sport too well, to hunt any but those, who can stand a good chase; and authors are the only objects in nature, which are magnified by distance and diminished by approach: Let the illustrious dead change places with the illustrious living, and they shall escape no better than they have done who make room for them; the more merit they bring amongst us, the heavier the tax they shall pay for it.

Let us suppose for a moment that Shakespear was now an untied poet, and opened his career with any one of his best plays: The next morning ushers into the world the following, or something like the following, critique.

“Last night was presented for the first time a tragedy called *Othello or the Moor of Venice*, avowedly the production of Mr. William Shakespear, the actor. This gentleman’s reputation in his profession is of the mediocre sort, and we predict that his present tragedy will not add much to it in any way.—*Medicribus esse poetis*—the reader can supply the
“rest—

"rest—*verb. sap.* As we profess ourselves to be
 "friendly to the players in general, we shall re-
 "serve our fuller critique of this piece, till
 "after its third night; for *we hold it very stuff*
 "*of the conscience* (to use Mr. Shakespear's own
 "words) not to war against the poet's park;
 "though we might apply the author's quaint
 "conceit to himself—

"Who steals his purse, steals trash; 'tis something;
 "nothing.

"In this last reply we agree with Mr. Shako-
 "pear that 'tis *nothing*, and our philosophy tells
 "us *ex nihilo nihil fit*.

"For the plot of this tragedy the most we can
 "say is, that it is certainly of the *moving* sort,
 "for it is here and there and every where; a
 "kind of theatrical *locus-potens*; a creature of
 "the pye-ball breed, like Jacob's muttons, be-
 "tween a black ram and a white ewe. It
 "brought to our mind the children's game of—
 "*I love my love with an A*—with this difference
 "only, that the young lady in this play loves
 "her love with a B, *because he is black*.—
 "*Risum teneatis?*

"There is one *Iago*, a bloody-minded fellow,
 "who stabs men in the dark behind their backs;
 "now this is a thing we hold to be most vile
 "and

“ and ever-to-be abhorred. Othello smotheres
 “ his white wife in bed ; our readers may think
 “ this a shabby kind of an action for a general
 “ of his high calling ; but we beg leave to ob-
 “ serve that it shews some spirit at least in
 “ Othello to attack the enemy in her *strong*
 “ *quarters* at once. There was an incident of
 “ a *pocket-handkerchief*, which *Othello* called out
 “ for most lustily, and we were rather sorry that
 “ his lady could not produce it, as we might
 “ then have seen one *handkerchief* at least
 “ employed in the tragedy. There were some
 “ *vernacular* phrases, which caught our ear, such
 “ as where the black damns his wife twice in a
 “ breath—*Oh damn her, damn her !*—which we
 “ thought favoured more of the language spoken
 “ at the doors, than *within* the doors of the
 “ theatre ; but when we recollect that the author
 “ used to amuse a leisure hour with calling up
 “ gentlemen’s coaches after the play was over,
 “ before he was promoted to take a part in it,
 “ we could readily account for old habits. Tho’
 “ we have seen many gentlemen and ladies kill
 “ themselves on the stage, yet we must give the
 “ author credit for the new way in which his
 “ hero puts himself out of the world : Othello,
 “ having smothered his wife, and being taken up
 “ by the officers of the state, prepares to dispatch

" himself and escape from the hands of justice ;
 " to bring this about, he begins a story about his
 " killing a man in Aleppo, which he illustrates
 " *par example* by stabbing himself, and so winds
 " up his story and his life in the same moment.
 " The author made his appearance in the person
 " of one *Brabantio* an old man, who makes his
 " first entry from a window ; this occasioned
 " some risibility in the audience : The part is of
 " an inferior kind, and Mr. Shakespear was
 " more indebted to the exertions of his brethren,
 " than to his own, for carrying his play through.
 " Upon the whole, we do not think the passion
 " of jealousy, on which the plot turns, so proper
 " for tragedy as comedy, and we would recom-
 " mend to the author, if his piece survives its
 " nine nights, to cut it down to a farce and
 " serve it up to the public *cum micâ salis* in that
 " shape. After this specimen of Mr. William
 " Shakespear's tragic powers, we cannot encou-
 " rage him to pursue his attempts upon Mel-
 " pomene ; for there is a good old proverb, which
 " we would advise him to bear in mind—*ne futor*
 " *ultra crepidam*—If he applies to his friend *Ben*,
 " he will turn it into English for him."

N° LXXXI.

THE conduct of a young lady, who is the only daughter of a very worthy father, and some alarming particulars respecting her situation which had come to my knowledge, gave occasion to me for writing my Paper, N° XLVI. in which I endeavour to point out the consequences parents have to apprehend from novels, which, though written upon moral plans, may be apt to take too strong a hold upon young and susceptible minds, especially in the softer sex, and produce an affected character, where we wish to find a natural one.

As the young person in question is now happily extricated from all danger, and has seen her error, I shall relate her story, not only as it contains some incidents which are amusing, but as it tends to illustrate by example the several instructions, which in my Paper before mentioned I endeavoured to convey.

Sappho is the only child of *Clemens*, who is a widower; a passionate fondness for this daughter, tempered with a very small share of observation or knowledge of the world, determined *Clemens* to an attempt (which has seldom been found to

succeed) of rendering Sappho a miracle of accomplishments, by putting her under the instructions of masters in almost every art and science at one and the same time: His house now became an academy of musicians, dancing-masters, language-masters, drawing-masters, geographers, historians, and a variety of inferior artists male and female; all these studies appeared the more desirable to Clemens, from his own ignorance of them, having devoted his life to business of a very different nature. Sappho made just as much progress in each, as is usual with young ladies so attended; she could do a little of most of them, and talk of all: She could play a concerto by heart with every grace her master had taught her, note for note, with the precise repetition of a barrel-organ: She had stuck the room round with drawings, which Clemens praised to the skies, and which Sappho assured him had been only *touch'd up a little* by her master: She could tell the capital of every country, when he questioned her out of the newspaper, and would point out the very spot upon the terrestrial globe, where Paris, Madrid, Naples and Constantinople actually were to be found: She had as much French as puzzled Clemens, and would have served her to buy blonde-lace and Paris netting
at

at a French milliner's; nay, she had gone so far as to pen a letter in that language to a young lady of her acquaintance, which her master, who stood over her whilst she wrote it, declared to be little inferior in stile to Madame Sevigné's: In history, both antient and modern, her progress was proportionable; for she could run through the twelve Cæsars in a breath, and reckon up all the kings from the conquest upon her fingers without putting one out of place; this appeared a prodigy to Clemens, and in the warmth of his heart he fairly told her she was one of the world's wonders; Sappho aptly set him right in this mistake, by assuring him that there were but seven wonders in the world, all of which she repeated to him, and only left him more convinced that she herself was deservedly the eighth.

There was a gentleman about fifty years old, a friend of Clemens, who came frequently to his house, and, being a man of talents and leisure, was so kind as to take great pains in directing and bringing Sappho forward in her studies: This was a very acceptable service to Clemens, and the visits of *Musidorus* were always joyfully welcomed both by him and Sappho herself: Musidorus declared himself overpaid by the delight it gave him to contem-

plate the opening talents of so promising a young lady; and as Sappho was now of years to establish her pretensions to taste and sentiment, Musidorus made such a selection of authors for her reading, as were best calculated to accomplish her in those particulars: In settling this important choice, he was careful to put none but writers of delicacy and sensibility into her hands; interesting and affecting tales or novels were the books he chiefly recommended, which by exhibiting the fairest patterns of female purity (suffering distress and even death itself from the attacks of licentious passion in the grosser sex) might inspire her sympathetic heart with pity, and guard it from seduction by displaying profligacy in its most odious colours.

Sappho's propensity to these studies fully answered the intentions of her kind director, and she became more and more attached to works of sentiment and pathos. Musidorus's next solicitude was to form her stile, and with this view he took upon himself the trouble of carrying on a kind of probationary correspondence with her; this happy expedient succeeded beyond expectation, for as two people, who saw each other every day, could have very little matter to write upon, there was so much the more exercise for invention; and such was
the

the copiousness and fluency of expression which she became mistress of by this ingenious practice, that she could fill four sides of letter paper with what other people express upon the back of a card: Clemens once, in the exultation of his heart, put a bundle of these manuscripts into my hands, which he confessed he did not clearly understand, but nevertheless believed them to be the most elegant things in the language; I shall give the reader a sample of two of them, which I drew out of the number, not by choice, but by chance; they were carefully folded, and labelled at the back in Sappho's own hand as follows, *Musidorus to Sappho of the 10th of June*; underneath she had wrote with a pencil these words:

PICTURESQUE!

ELEGANT!

HAPPY ALLUSION TO THE SUN!

KING DAVID NOT TO BE COMPARED TO MU-

SIDORUS.

Here follows the note, and I cannot doubt but the reader will confess that its contents deserve all that the label expresses.

" *June the 10th 1785.*

" As soon as I arose this morning, I directed my eyes to the east, and demanded of the sun, if he had given you my good-morrow : This was my parting injunction last night, when I took leave of him in the west, and he this moment plays his beams with so particular a lustre, that I am satisfied he has fulfilled my commission, and saluted the eyelids of Sappho : If he is described to *come forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber,* how much rather may it be said of him, when he comes forth out of *your's* ? I shall look for him to perform his journey this day with a peculiar glee ; I expect he will not suffer a cloud to come near him, and I shall not be surprized, if through his eagerness to repeat his next morning's salutation, he should *whip his fiery-footed steeds to the west* some hours before their time ; unless indeed you should walk forth whilst he is descending, and he should delay the wheels of his chariot to look back upon an object so pleasing. You see therefore, most amiable Sappho, that unless you fulfil your engagement, and consent to repeat our usual ramble in the cool of the evening, our part of the world is likely to be in darkness before it is expected,

" and

“and that nature herself will be put out of
“course, if Sappho forfeits her promise to
“Musidorus.”

“SAPPHO IN REPLY TO MUSIDORUS.”

“If nature holds her course till Sappho for-
“feits her word to Musidorus, neither the
“setting nor the rising sun shall vary from his
“appointed time. But why does Musidorus
“ascribe to me so flattering an influence, when,
“if I have any interest with Apollo, it must be
“to his good offices only that I owe it? If he
“bears the messages of Musidorus to me, is it
“not a mark of his respect to the person who
“sends him, rather than to her he is sent to?
“And whom should he so willingly obey, as
“one whom he so copiously inspires? I shall
“walk as usual in the cool hour of even-tide,
“listening *with greedy ear* to that discourse,
“which, by the refined and elevated sentiments
“it inspires, has taught me to look down with
“silent pity and contempt upon those frivolous
“beings, who talk the mere language of the
“senses, not of the soul, and to whose silly
“prattle I neither condescend to lend an ear, or
“to subscribe a word. Know then that Sappho
“will reserve her attention for Musidorus, and
“if Apollo *shall delay the wheels of his chariot*

“to wait upon us in our evening ramble, believe me he will not stop for the unworthy purpose of looking back upon Sappho, but for the nobler gratification of listening to Musidorus.”

The evening walk took place as usual, but it was a walk in the dusty purlieus of London, and Sappho sighed for a cottage and the country: Musidorus seconded the sigh, and he had abundance of fine things to say on the occasion: Retirement is a charming subject for a sentimental enthusiast; there is not a poet in the language, but will help him out with a description; Musidorus had them all at his fingers ends, from *Hesperus that led the starry host*, down to a glow-worm.

The passion took so strong a hold of Sappho's mind, that she actually assailed her father on the subject, and with great energy of persuasion moved him to adopt her ideas: It did not exactly suit Clemens to break up a very lucrative profession, and set out in search of some solitary cottage, whose romantic situation might suit the spiritualized desires of his daughter, and I am afraid he was for once in his life not quite so respectful to her wishes, as he might have been: Sappho was so unused to contradiction,

dition, that she explained herself to Musidorus with some asperity, and it became the subject of much debate between them: Not that he held a contrary opinion from her's; but the difficulty which embarrassed both parties was, where to find the happy scene she sighed for, and how to obtain it when it was found. The first part of this difficulty was at last surmounted, and the chosen spot was pointed out by Musidorus, which according to his description was the very bower of felicity; it was in a northern county at a distance from the capital, and its situation was most delectable: The next measure was a strong one; for the question to be decided was, if Sappho should abandon her project or her father; she called upon Musidorus for his opinion, and he delivered it as follows:—"If I was not convinced, most amiable Sappho, that a second application to Clemens would be as unsuccessful as the first, I would advise you to the experiment; but as there is no doubt of this, it must be the height of imprudence to put that to a trial, of which there is no hope: It comes therefore next to be considered, if you shall give up your plan, or execute it without his privacy; in other words, if you shall or shall not do that, which is to make you happy:

"If

"If it were not consistent with the strictest
 "purity of character, I should answer no; but
 "when I reflect upon the innocence, the sim-
 "plicity, the moral beauty of the choice you
 "make, I then regard the duty you owe to
 "yourself as superior to all others, which are
 "falsely called natural; whereas, if you follow
 "this in preference, you obey nature herself:
 "If you were of an age too childish to be al-
 "lowed to know what suits you best, or, if
 "being old enough to be intitled to a choice,
 "you wanted wit to make one, there would be
 "no doubt in the case; nay, I will go so far as
 "to say, that if Clémens was a man of judg-
 "ment superior to your own, I should be
 "staggered with his opposition; but if truth
 "may ever be spoken, it may on this occasion,
 "and who is there that does not see the weak-
 "ness of the father's understanding; who but
 "must acknowledge the pre-eminence of the
 "daughter's? I will speak yet plainer, most
 "incomparable Sappho, it is not fitting that
 "folly should prescribe to wisdom: The ques-
 "tion therefore is come to an upshot, Shall
 "Sappho live a life she despises and detests, to
 "humour a father, whose weakness she pities,
 "but whose judgment she cannot respect?"
 "No," replied Sappho, "that point is de-
 "cided;

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“cided; pass on to the next, and speak to me upon the practicability of executing what I am resolved to attempt.” “The authority of a parent,” resumed Musidorus, “is such over an unprotected child, that reason will be no defence to you against obstinacy and coercion. In the case of a son, profession gives that defence; new duties are imposed by a man’s vocation, which supersede what are called natural ones; but in the instance of a daughter, where shall she fly for protection against the imperious controul of a parent, but to the arms —? I tremble to pronounce the word; your own imagination must complete the sentence”—“Oh! horrible!” cried Sappho, interrupting him, “I will never marry; I will never so contaminate the spotless lustre of my incorporeal purity: No, Musidorus, no—I’ll bear my blushing honours still about me.—“And fit you should,” cried Musidorus, “what dæmon dare defile them? Perish the man, that could intrude a sensual thought within the sphere of such repelling virtue!—“But marriage is a form; and forms are pure; at least they may be such; there’s no pollution in a name; and if a name will shelter you, why should you fear to take it?”—“I perceive,” answered Sappho, “that I am
“in

"in a very dangerous dilemma; since the very
 "expedient, which is to protect me from vio-
 "lence of one sort, exposes me to it under
 "another shape too odious to mention."—
 "And is there then," said Musidorus sighing,
 "is there no human being in your thoughts in
 "whom you can confide? Alas for me! if you
 "believe you have no friend who is not tainted
 "with the impurities of his sex: And what is
 "friendship? what, but the union of souls?
 "and are not souls thus united already mar-
 "ried? For my part, I have long regarded our
 "pure and spiritualized connection in this light,
 "and I cannot foresee how any outward cere-
 "mony is to alter that inherent delicacy of
 "sentiment, which is inseparable from my soul's
 "attachment to the soul of Sappho: If we are
 "determined to despise the world, we should also
 "despise the constructions of the world: If re-
 "tirement is our choice, and the life and
 "habits of Clemens are not to be the life and
 "habits of Sappho, why should Musidorus,
 "who is ready to sacrifice every thing in her
 "defence, not be thought incapable of abusing
 "her confidence, when he offers the protection
 "of his name? If a few words muttered over
 "us by a Scotch blacksmith will put all our
 "troubles to rest, why should we resort to
 "dangers

“ dangers and difficulties, when so easy a remedy is before us?—But why should I seek for arguments to allay your apprehensions, when you have in me so natural a security for my performance of the strictest stipulations ?” —“ And what is that security ?” she eagerly demanded. Musidorus now drew back a few paces, and with the most solemn air and action, laying his hand upon his heart, replied, “ My age, madam !”—“ That’s true,” cried Sappho; and now the conversation took a new turn, in the course of which they agreed upon their plan of proceeding, settled their rendezvous for the next day, and Musidorus departed to prepare all things necessary for the security of their expedition.

N° LXXXII.

Tange Chloën semel arrogantem.

(HORAT.)

“ O Cupid, touch this rebel heart ! ”

UPON the day appointed, Sappho, with her father's consent, set out in a hired post-chaise upon a pretended visit to a relation, who lived about twenty miles from town on the northern road : At the inn where she was to change horses, she dismissed her London postillion with a short note to her father, in which she told him she should write to him in two or three days time : Here she took post for the next stage upon the great road, where she was met by Musidorus, and from thence they pressed forward with all possible expedition towards Gretna Green.

The mind of Sappho was visited with some compunctions by the way ; but the eloquence of her companion, and the respectful delicacy of his behaviour, soon reconciled her conscience to the step she had taken : The reflections which passed in Musidorus's breast, were not so easily quieted : The anxiety of his thoughts, and the
fatigues

fatigues of the journey, brought so violent an attack upon him, that when he was within a stage or two of his journey's end, he found himself unable to proceed; the gout had seized upon his stomach, and immediate relief became necessary: The romantic visions, with which Sappho hitherto had indulged her imagination, now began to vanish, and a gloomy prospect opened upon her; in place of a comforter and companion by the way to soothe her cares, and fill her mind with soft healing sentiments, she had a wretched object before her eyes, tormented with pain and at the point of death.

The house, in which she had taken shelter, was of the meanest sort, but the good people were humane and assiduous, and the village afforded a medical assistant of no contemptible skill in his profession: There was another consolation attended her situation, for in the same inn was quartered a dragoon officer with a small recruiting party; this young cornet was of a good family, of an engaging person and very elegant address; his humanity was exerted not only in consoling Sappho, but in nursing and cheering Musidorus. These charitable offices were performed with such a natural benignity, that Sappho must have been most insensible if she could have overlooked them; her gentle heart on the

contrary overflowed with gratitude, and in the extremity of her distress she freely confessed to him, that but for his support she must have sunk outright. Though the extremity of Musidorus's danger was now over, yet he was incapable of exertion; and Sappho, who was at leisure to reflect upon her situation, began to waver in her resolution, and to put some questions to herself, which reason could not readily answer. Her thoughts were so distracted and perplexed, that she saw no resource but to unburthen them, and throw herself upon the honour and discretion of Lionel, for so this young officer was called. This she had frequently in mind to do, and many opportunities offered themselves for it, but still her sensibility of shame prevented it. The constant apprehension of pursuit hung over her, and sometimes she meditated to go back to her father; in one of these moments she had begun to write a letter to Clemens to prepare him for her return, when Lionel entered the room and informed her that he perceived so visible an amendment in Musidorus, that he expected to congratulate her on his recovery in a very few days—"and then, Madam," added he, "my sorrows will begin where your's end; be it so! if you are happy, I must not complain: I presume this gentleman is your father, or near relation?"

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tion!"—"Father!" exclaimed Sappho:—She cast her eyes upon the letter she was inditing, and burst into tears. Lionel approached, and took her hand in his; she raised her handkerchief to her eyes with the other, and he proceeded—
 "If my anxious solicitude for an unknown lady, in whose happiness my heart is warmly interested, exposes me to any hazard of your displeasure, stop me before I speak another word; if not, confide in me, and you shall find me ready to devote my life to serve you. The mystery about you and the road you are upon (were it not for the companion you are with) would tempt me to believe you was upon a generous errand, to reward some worthy man, whom fortune and your parents do not favour; but this poor object above stairs makes that impossible. If however there is any favoured lover, waiting in secret agony for that expected moment, when your release from hence may crown him with the best of human blessings, the hand, which now has hold of your's, shall be devoted to his service: Command me where you will; I never yet have forfeited my honour, and cannot wrong your confidence."
 —"You are truly generous," replied Sappho; "there is no such man; the hand you hold is yet untainted, and till now has been untouched;

"release it therefore, and I will proceed.—My
 "innocence has been my error; I have been the
 "dupe of sentiment: I am the only child of a
 "fond father, and never knew the blessing of a
 "mother; when I look back upon my education,
 "I perceive that art has been exhausted, and
 "nature overlooked in it. The unhappy object
 "above stairs has been my sole adviser and di-
 "rector; for my father is immersed in business:
 "From him, and from the duty which I owe
 "him, I confess I have seceded, and my design
 "was to devote myself to retirement. My
 "scheme I now perceive was visionary in the
 "extreme; left to my own reflections, reason
 "shews me both the danger and the folly of it:
 "I have therefore determined upon returning to
 "my father, and am writing to him a letter,
 "which I shall send by express, to relieve him
 "from the agonies my silly conduct has occa-
 "sioned."—"What you have now disclosed to
 "me," said Lionel, "with a sincerity that does
 "equal honour to yourself and me, demands a
 "like sincerity on my part, and I must therefore
 "confess to you, that Musidorus, believing him-
 "self at the point of death, imparted to me
 "not only every thing that has passed, but all
 "the future purposes of this treacherous plot,
 "from which you have so providentially escaped;
 "these

" these I shall not explain to you at present, but
 " you may depend upon it, that this attack upon
 " his life has saved his conscience. I cannot as
 " a man of honour oppose myself to your resolu-
 " tion of returning home immediately; and yet
 " when I consider the ridicule you will have to
 " encounter from the world at large, the reflec-
 " tions that will arise in your mind, when there
 " is perhaps no friend at hand to assuage them,
 " but above all when I thus contemplate your
 " charms, and recollect that affectation is ex-
 " pelled, and nature reinstated in your heart, I
 " cannot resist the impulse nor the opportunity
 " of appealing to that nature against a separation
 " so fatal to my peace: Yes, loveliest of women,
 " I must appeal to nature; I must hope this
 " heart of your's, where such refined sensations
 " have resided, will not be shut from others of a
 " more generous kind. What could the name
 " of Musidorus do, which Lionel's cannot?
 " Why should you not replace an unworthy
 " friend with one of fairer principles? with one
 " of honourable birth, of equal age, and owner
 " of a heart, that beats with ardent passion to-
 " wards you? Had you been made the sacrifice
 " of this chimæra, this illusion, what had your
 " father suffered? If I am honoured with your
 " hand in marriage, what can he complain of?

" My conduct, my connections and my hopes in
 " life will bear the scrutiny: Suffer me to say
 " you will have a protector, whose character can
 " face the world, and whose spirit cannot fear it,
 " As for worldly motives, I renounce them;
 " give me yourself and your affections; give me
 " possession of this hand, these eyes, and the soul
 " which looks through them; let your father
 " withhold the rest. Now, loveliest and most
 " beloved, have you the heart to share a soldier's
 " fortune? Have you the noble confidence to
 " take his word? Will you follow, where his
 " honour bids him go, and whether a joyful
 " victory or a glorious death attends him, will
 " you receive him living, or entomb him dying
 " in your arms?"

Whilst Lionel was uttering these words, his
 action, his emotion, and that honest glow of
 passion, which nature only can assume and arti-
 fice cannot counterfeit, had so subdued the yield-
 ing heart of Sappho, that he must have been
 dull indeed, if he could have wanted any stronger
 confirmation of his success, than what her looks
 bestowed: Never was silence more eloquent;
 the labour of language and the forms of law had
 no share in this contract: A sigh of speechless
 ecstasy drew up the nuptial bond; the operations
 of love are momentary: Tears of affection in-
 terchangeably

terchangeably witnessed the deed, and the contracting parties sealed it with an inviolable embrace.

Every moment now had wings to waft them to that happy spot, where the unholy hand of law has not yet plucked up the root of love: Freedom met them on the very extremity of her precincts; Nature held out her hand to welcome them, and the Loves and Graces, though exiled to a desert, danced in her train.

Thus was Sappho, when brought to the very brink of destruction, rescued by the happy intervention of Providence. The next day produced an interview with Clemens, at the house to which they returned after the ceremony in Scotland: The meeting, as might well be expected, was poignant and reproachful; but when Sappho, in place of a superannuated sentimentalist, presented to him a son-in-law, in whose martial form and countenance he beheld youth, honour, manly beauty, and every attractive grace that could justify her choice, his transports became excessive; and their union, being now sanctified by the blessing of a father, and warranted by love and nature, has snatched a deluded victim from misery and error, and added one conjugal instance to the scanty records of unfashionable felicity.

Let not my young female readers believe that the extravagance of Sappho's conduct is altogether out of nature, or that they have nothing to apprehend from men of Musidorus's age and character; my observation convinces me to the contrary. *Gravity*, says Lord Shaftesbury, *is the very essence of imposture*; and sentimental gravity, varnished over with the experienced artifice of age and wisdom, is the worst of its species.

N° LXXXIII.

THE deistical writers, who would fain persuade us that the world was in possession of as pure a system of morality before the introduction of Christianity as since, affect to make a great display of the virtues of many eminent heathens, particularly of the philosophers Socrates, Plato, and some others.

When they set up these characters as examples of perfection, which human nature with the aids of revelation either has not attained to, or not exceeded, they put us upon an invidious task, which no man would voluntarily engage in, and
challenge

challenge us to discuss a question, which, if thoroughly agitated, cannot fail to strip the illustrious dead of more than half the honours which the voice of ages has agreed to give them.

It is therefore to be wished that they had held the argument to its general terms, and shewn us where that system of ethics is to be found, which they are prepared to bring into comparison with the moral doctrines of Christ. This I take to be the fair ground whereon the controversy should have been decided, and here it would infallibly have been brought to issue; but they knew their weapons better than to trust them in so close a conflict.

The maxims of some heathen philosophers, and the moral writings of Plato, Cicero and Seneca, contain many noble truths, worthy to be held in veneration by posterity; and if the deist can from these produce a system of morality as pure and perfect as that which claims its origin from divine revelation, he will prove that God gave to man a faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong with such correctness, that his own immediate revelation added no lights to those which the powers of reason had already discovered. Let us grant therefore for a moment, that Christ's religion revealed to the world no new truths in morality, nor removed any old errors,

and what triumph accrues to the deist by the admission? The most he gains is to bring reason to a level with revelation, as to its moral doctrines; in so doing he dignifies man's nature, and shews how excellent a faculty God gave his creatures in their original formation, to guide their judgments and controul their actions; but will this diminish the importance of revealed religion? Certainly not, unless he can prove one or both of the following positions; viz.

First, That the moral tenets of Christianity either fall short of, or run counter to, the moral tenets of natural religion; or,

Secondly, That Christ's mission was nugatory and superfluous, because the world was already in possession of as good a system of morality as he imparted to mankind.

As to the first, I believe it has never been attempted by any heathen or deistical advocate to convict the Gospel system of false morality, or to alledge that it is short and defective in any one particular duty, when compared with that system which the world was possess of without its aid. No man, I believe, has controverted its truths, though many have disputed its discoveries: No man has been hardy enough to say of any of its doctrines—*This we ought not to practise*; though many have been vain enough to cry out—*All this*

this we know before.—Let us leave this position therefore for the present, and pass to the next, viz, Whether Christ's mission was nugatory and superfluous, because the world already knew as much morality as he taught them.

This will at once be answered, if the Gospel assertion be established, that life and immortality were brought to light. We need not adduce any other of the mysteries of revelation; we may safely rest the question here, and say with the apostle to the Gentile world—*Behold! I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump (for the trumpet shall sound) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.* Mark to how short an issue the argument is now brought! Either the apostle is not warranted in calling this a *mystery*, or the deist is not warranted in calling Christ's mission nugatory and superfluous.

It now rests with the deist to produce from the writings and opinions of mankind antecedent to Christianity, such a revelation of things to come, as can fully anticipate the Gospel revelation, or else to admit with the apostle that *a mystery was shewn*; and if the importance of this *mystery* be admitted, as it surely must, the importance of Christ's mission can no longer be disputed;

disputed; and though revelation shall have added nothing to the heathen system of morality, still it does not follow that it was superfluous and nugatory.

Let the deist resort to the heathen Elysium and the realms of Pluto in search of evidences, to set in competition with the Christian revelation of a future state; let him call in Socrates, Plato, and as many more as he can collect in his cause; it is but lost labour to follow the various tracks of reason through the pathless ocean of conjecture, always wandering, though with different degrees of deviation. What does it avail, though Seneca had taught as good morality as Christ himself preached from the Mount? How does it affect revealed religion, though Tully's Offices were found superior to Saint Paul's Epistles? Let the deist indulge himself in declaiming on the virtues of the heathen heroes and philosophers; let him ransack the annals of the Christian world, and present us with legions of crusaders drenched in human blood, furious fanatics rushing on each other's throats for the distinction of a word, massacring whole nations and laying nature waste for a metaphysical quibble, it touches not religion; let him array a host of persecuting Inquisitors with all their torturing engines, the picture indeed

is

is terrible, but who will say it is the picture of Christianity?

When we consider the ages, which have elapsed since the introduction of Christianity, and the events attending its propagation, how wonderful is the history we contemplate! We see a mighty light spreading over all mankind from one spark kindled in an obscure corner of the earth: An humble persecuted teacher preaches a religion of peace, of forgiveness of injuries, of submission to temporal authorities, of meekness, piety, brotherly love and universal benevolence; he is tried, condemned and executed for his doctrines; he rises from the tomb, and, breaking down the doors of death, sets open to all mankind the evidence of a life to come, and at the same time points out the sure path to everlasting happiness in that future state: A few unlettered disciples, his adherents and survivors, take up his doctrines, and going forth amongst the provinces of the Roman empire, then in its zenith, preach a religion to the Gentiles, directly striking at the foundation of the most splendid fabric Superstition ever reared on earth: These Gentiles are not a rude and barbarous race, but men of illuminated minds, acute philosophers, eloquent orators, powerful reasoners, eminent in arts and sciences, and armed

armed with sovereign power: What an undertaking for the teachers of Christianity! What a conflict for a religion, holding forth no temporal allurements! On the contrary, promising nothing but mortification in this world, and referring all hope of a reward for present sufferings to the unseen glories of a life to come.

The next scene which this review presents to us, shews the followers of Christianity suffering under persecution by the heathen, whom their numbers had alarmed, and who began to tremble for their gods: In the revolution of ages the church becomes triumphant, and, made wanton by prosperity, degenerates from its primitive simplicity, and running into idle controversies and metaphysical schisms, persecutes its seceding brethren with unremitting fury; whilst the Popes, thundering out anathemas and hurling torches from their throne, secta the vicegerents of the furies rather than of the author of a religion of peace: The present time affords a different view; the temper of the church grows milder, though its zeal less fervent; men of different communions begin to draw nearer to each other; as refinement of manners becomes more general, toleration spreads; we are no longer slaves to the laws of religion, but converts to the reason of it; and being allowed to examine the
the

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the evidence and foundation of the faith that is in us, we discover that Christianity is a religion of charity, toleration, reason and peace, enjoining us to *have compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; knowing that we are thereunto called, that we should inherit a blessing.*

N° LXXXIV.

TASTE may be considered either as sensitive or mental; and under each of these denominations is sometimes spoken of as natural, sometimes as acquired: I propose to treat of it in its intellectual construction only, and in this sense Mr. Addison defines it to be *that faculty of the soul, which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike.*

This definition may very properly apply to the faculty which we exercise in judging and deciding upon the works of others; but how does it apply to the faculty exercised by those who produced those works? How does it serve
to

to develope the taste of an author, the taste of a painter or a statuary? and yet we may speak of a *work* of taste with the same propriety, as we do of a *man* of taste. It should seem therefore as if this definition went only to that denomination of taste, which we properly call an *acquired* taste; the productions of which generally end in imitation, whilst those of *natural* taste bear the stamp of originality: Another characteristic of natural taste will be simplicity; for how can nature give more than she possesses, and what is nature but simplicity? Now when the mind of any man is endued with a fine natural taste, and all means of profiting by other men's ideas are out of the question, that taste will operate by disposing him to select the fairest subjects out of what he sees either for art or imagination to work upon: Still his production will be marked with simplicity; but as it is the province of taste to separate deformity or vulgarity from what is merely simple, so according to the nature of his mind who possesses it, beauty or sublimity will be the result of the operation: If his taste inclines him to what is fair and elegant in nature, he will produce beauty; if to what is lofty, bold and tremendous, he will strike out sublimity.

Agreeably to this, we may observe in all literary

rary and enlightened nations, their earliest authors and artists are the most simple: First, adventurers represent what they see or conceive with simplicity, because their impulse is unbiassed by emulation, having nothing in their sight either to imitate, avoid, or excel; on the other hand their successors are sensible, that one man's description of nature must be like another's, and in their zeal to keep clear of imitation, and to outstrip a predecessor, they begin to compound, refine, and even to distort. I will refer to the *Venus de Medicis* and the *Laöcoon* for an illustration of this: I do not concern myself about the dates or sculptors of these figures; but in the former we see beautiful simplicity, the fairest form in nature, selected by a fine taste, and imitated without affectation or distortion, and as it should seem without even an effort of art: In the *Laöcoon* we have a complicated plot; we unravel a maze of ingenious contrivance, where the artist has compounded and distorted Nature in the ambition of surpassing her.

Virgil possessed a fine taste according to Mr. Addison's definition, which I before observed applies only to an *acquired taste*: He had the faculty of discerning the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with

dislike: He had also the faculty of *imitating* what he *discerned*; so that I cannot verify what I have advanced by any stronger instance than his. I should think there does not exist a poet, who has gone such lengths in imitation as Virgil; for to pass over his pastoral and bucolic poems, which are evidently drawn from Theocritus and Hesiod, with the assistance of Aratus in every thing that relates to the scientific part of the signs and seasons, it is supposed that his whole narrative of the destruction of Troy, with the incident of the wooden horse and the episode of Sinon, are an almost literal translation of Pisander the epic poet, who in his turn perhaps might copy his account from the *Iliad* Minor; (but this last is mere suggestion). As for the *Æneid*, it does little else but reverse the order of Homer's epic, making *Æneas's* voyage precede his wars in Italy, whereas the voyage of Ulysses is subsequent to the operations of the *Iliad*. As Apollo is made hostile to the Greeks, and the cause of his offence is introduced by Homer in the opening of the *Iliad*, so Juno in the *Æneid* stands in his place with every circumstance of imitation. It would be an endless task to trace the various instances throughout the *Æneid*, where scarce a single incident can be found which is not copied from Homer:

Neither

Neither is there greater originality in the executive parts of the poem, than in the constructive; with this difference only, that he has copied passages from various authors, Roman as well as Greek, though from Homer the most. Amongst the Greeks, the dramatic poets Æschylus, Sophocles; and principally Euripides, have had the greatest share of his attention; Aristophanes, Menander and other comic authors, Callimachus and some of the lyric writers, also may be traced in his imitations. A vast collection of passages from Ennius chiefly, from Lucretius, Furius, Lucilius, Pacuvius, Sævius, Nævius, Varius, Catullus, Accius and others of his own nation, has been made by Macrobius in his *Saturnalia*, where Virgil has done little else but put their sentiments into more elegant verse; so that in strictness of speaking we may say of the *Æneid*, "that it is a miscellaneous compilation of poetical passages, * composing all together an epic poem, formed * upon the model of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; * abounding in beautiful versification, and justly " to be admired for the fine *acquired taste* of its " author, but devoid of originality either of " construction or execution." Besides its general inferiority as being a copy from Homer, it particularly falls off from its original in the

conception and preservation of character: It does not reach the sublimity and majesty of its model, but it has in a great degree adopted the simplicity, and entirely avoided the rusticity of Homer.

Lucan and Claudian in later ages were perhaps as good versifiers as Virgil, but far inferior to him in that fine acquired taste, which he excelled in: They are ingenious, but not simple; and execute better than they contrive. A passage from Claudian, which I shall beg the reader's leave to compare with one from Virgil (where he personifies the evil passions and plagues of mankind, and posts them at the entrance of hell, to which Æneas is descending) will exemplify what I have said; for at the same time that it will bear a dispute, whether Claudian's description is not even superior to Virgil's in poetical merit, yet the judicious manner of introducing it in one case, and the evident want of judgment in the other, will help to shew, that the reason why we prefer Virgil to Claudian, is more on account of his superiority of taste than of talents.

Claudian's description stands in the very front of his poem on Ruffinus; Virgil's is woven into his fable, and will be found in the sixth book of his Æneid, as follows:

Vestibulum

*Vestibulum ante ipsum, primisque in faucibus Orci,
Luctus, et ultrices posuere cubilia Curæ;
Pallentesque habitant Morbi, tristisque Senectus,
Et Metus, et maleuada Fames, et turpis Egestas,
Terribiles visu formæ; Lethumque, Laborque;
Tum consanguineus Leti Sopor, et mala mentis
Gaudia, mortiferumque adverso in limine Bellum,
Ferreique Eumenidum thalami, et Discordia demens
Viperæum crinem vittis innexa cruentis.*

(VIRGIL.)

*Just in the gates, and in the jaws of Hell,
Revengeful Cares and sullen Sorrows dwell,
And pale Diseases, and repining Age;
Want, Fear, and Famine's unresisted rage;
Here Toils, and Death, and Death's half-brother, Sleep,
Forms terrible to view, their centry keep;
With anxious Pleasures of a guilty mind,
Deep Frauds before, and open Force behind:
The Furies iron beds, and Strife that shakes
Her hissing tresses, and unfolds her snakes.*

(DRYDEN.)

*Protinus infernas ad limina tetra sorores
Concilium deformæ vocat; glomerantur in unum
Innumera pestes Erebi, quascunque sinistro
Nox genuit sæta: Nutrix Discordia belli;
Imperiosa Fames; leto vicina Senectus;
Impatiensque sui Morbus; Livorque secundis
Anxius, et scisso Mærens velamine Luctus,
Et Timor, et cæco præceps Audacia vultu;*

*Et luxur populator opum; cui semper adhaerens
Infelix humili gressu comitatur Egestas;
Fedaque Avaritia complexa pectora matris
Insomnes longo cunctantur examina Cura.*

(CLAUDIAN.)

“ The infernal council, at Alecto’s call
“ Conven’d, assemble in the Stygian hall;
“ Myriads of ghastly plagues, that shun the light,
“ Daughters of Erebus and gloomy Night:
“ Strife war-compelling; Famine’s wasting rage;
“ And Death just hovering o’er decrepid Age;
“ Envy, Prosperity’s repining foe,
“ Restless Disease, and self-dishevell’d Woe,
“ Rashness, and Fear, and Poverty, that steals
“ Close as his shadow at the Spendthrift’s heels;
“ And Cares, that clinging to the Miser’s breast,
“ Forbid his sordid soul to taste of rest.”

The productions of the human genius will borrow their complexion from the times in which they originate. Ben Jonson says, that the players often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespear, that in his writing (whatsoever he penned) he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been (adds he) *Would he had blotted out a thousand!* which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance, who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted; and to justify mine own candour, for I loved the
man,

man, and do honour his memory on this side idolatry as much as any: He was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantasie, brave notions and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped; Sufflamendus erat, as Augustus said of Haterius: His wit was in his own power; would the rule of it had been so too!

I think there can be no doubt but this kind of indignant negligence with which Shakespear wrote, was greatly owing to the slight consideration he had for his audience. Jonson treated them with the dictatorial haughtiness of a pedant; Shakespear with the carelessness of a gentleman who wrote at his ease, and gave them the first flowings of his fancy without any dread of their correction. These were times in which the poet indulged his genius without restraint; he stood alone and super-eminent, and wanted no artificial scaffold to raise him above the heads of his contemporaries; he was natural, lofty, careless, and daringly incorrect. Place the same man in other times, amongst a people polished almost into general equality, and he shall begin to hesitate and retract his sallies; for in this respect poetical are like military excursions, and it makes a wide

difference in the movements of a skilful general, whether he is to fall into a country defended by well-disciplined troops, or only by an irregular mob of unarmed barbarians. Shakespear might vault his Pegasus without a rein; mountains might rise and seas roll in vain before him; Nature herself could neither stop nor circumscribe his career. The modern man of verse mounts with the precaution of a riding-master, and prances round his little circle full-bitted and caparisoned in all the formality of a review. Whilst he is thus pacing and *piaffering* with every body's eyes upon him, his friends are calling out every now and then — "Seat yourself firm in the saddle! Hold your body straight! Keep your spurs from his sides for fear he gets a kicking! Have a care he does not stumble; there lies a stone, here runs a ditch; keep your whip still, and depend upon your bit, if you have not a mind to break your neck!" — On the other quarter his enemies are bawling out — "How like a taylor that fellow sits on horseback! Look at his feet, look at his arms! Set the curs upon him; tie a cracker to his horse's tail, and make sport for the spectators!" — All this while perhaps the poor devil could have performed passably well, if it were not for the
mobbing

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mobbing and hallooing about him: Whereas Shakespear mounts without fear, and starting in the jockey-phrase *at score*, cries out, "Stand clear, ye sons of earth! or, by the beams of my father Apollo, I'll ride over you, and trample you into dust!"

N^o LXXXV.

I WAS in company the other day with a young gentleman, who had newly succeeded to a considerable estate, and was a good deal struck with the conversation of an elderly person present, who was very deliberately casting up the several demands that the community at large had upon his property.—"Are you aware," says he, "how small a portion of your revenue will properly remain to yourself, when you have satisfied all the claims which you must pay to society and your country for living amongst us and supporting the character of what is called a landed gentleman? Part of your income will be stopt for the maintenance of them who have none, under the denomination of poor-rates; this may be called a fine upon the partiality

"tiality of fortune, levied by the law of society,
 "which will not trust its poor members to the
 "precarious charity of the rich: Another part
 "must go to the debts and necessities of the go-
 "vernment, which protects you in war and
 "peace, and is also a fine, which you must be
 "content to pay for the honour of being an
 "Englishman, and the advantage of living in a
 "land of liberty and security. The learned
 "professions will also have their share; the
 "church for taking care of your soul, the phy-
 "sician for looking after your body, and the
 "lawyer must have part of your property for
 "superintending the rest. The merchant, trades-
 "man and artisan will have their profit upon all
 "the multiplied wants, comforts and indulgen-
 "ces of civilized life; these are not to be enu-
 "merated, for they depend on the humours
 "and habits of men; they have grown up with
 "the refinements and elegancies of the age,
 "and they will further encrease, as these shall
 "advance: They are the conductors, which,
 "like the blood-vessels in the human frame, cir-
 "culate your wealth, and every other man's
 "wealth, through every limb and even fibre
 "of the national body: The hand of industry
 "creates that wealth, and to the hand of
 "industry

"industry it finally returns, as blood does to the heart."

If we trace the situation of man from a mere state of nature to the highest state of civilization, we shall find these artificial wants and dependences ~~increase~~ with every stage and degree of his improvements; so that if we consider each nation apart as one great machine, the several parts and springs, which give it motion, naturally become more and more complicated and multifarious, as the uses to which it is applied are more and more diversified. Again, if we compare two nations in an equal state of civilization, we may remark, that where the greater freedom obtains, there the greater variety of artificial wants will obtain also, and of course property will circulate through more channels: This I take to be the case upon a comparison between France and England, arising from the different constitutions of them and us with respect to civil liberty.

The natural wants of men are pretty much the same in most states, but the humours of men will take different directions in different countries, and are governed in a great degree by the laws and constitution of the realm in which they are found: There are numbers of people in England, who get their living by arts and occupations, which would not be tolerated in a de-

spotic government. Men's manners are simplified in proportion to the restraint and circumscription under which they are kept. The country sports of English gentlemen furnish maintenance and employment to vast numbers of our people, whereas in France and other arbitrary states, men of the first rank and fortune reside in the capital, and keep no establishments of this sort. What a train of grooms, jockies and stable-boys follow the heels of our horses and hounds in tight boots and leather breeches! each of which carries the clothes of six men upon his back, cased in one skin of flannel under another, like the coats of an onion. The locomotive mania of an Englishman circulates his person, and of course his cash, into every quarter of the kingdom: A Frenchman takes a journey only when he cannot help it, an Englishman has no other reason but because he likes it; he moves with every shift of the weather, and follows the changes of the most variable climate in the world; a frosty morning puts him from his hunting, and he is in London before night; a thaw meets him in town, and again he scampers into the country: He has a horse to run at Epsom, another at Salisbury, and a third at York, and he must be on the spot to back every one of them; he has a stud at Newmarket, a mistress in London,

don, a shooting-box in Norfolk, and a pack of fox-hounds in the New Forest: For one wheel that real business puts in motion, pleasure, whim, *annui* turn one hundred: Sickness, which confines all the rest of the world, sends him upon his travels; one doctor plunges him into the sea at Brighthelmston, a second steepes him in warm water at Buxton; and a third sends him to Bath; for the gentlemen of the learned faculty, whether they help us into life, or help us out of it, make us pay toll at each gate; and if at any time their art keeps us alive, the fine we must pay to their ingenuity makes the renewal in some cases too hard a bargain for a poor man to profit by. In all other countries upon earth a man is contented to be well and pay nothing for being so, but in England even health is an expensive article, as we are for ever contriving how to be a little better, and physicians are too conscientious to take a fee and do nothing for it. If there is any thing like ridicule in this, it is against the patient and not against the physician I would wish to point it; it is in England that the profession is truly dignified, and if it is here accompanied with greater emoluments, it is proportionably practised with superior learning; if life is more valuable in a land of freedom than in a land of slavery, why should it not be paid for according

cording to its value? In despotic states, where men's lives are in fact the property of the prince, all subjects should in justice be cured or killed at his proper charge; but where a man's house is his castle, his health is his own concern.

As to the other learned profession of the law, to its honour be it spoken, there is that charming perplexity about it, that we can ruin one another and ourselves with the greatest certainty and facility. It is so superior to all other sciences, that it can turn demonstration into doubt, truth into contradiction, make improbability put matter of fact out of countenance, and hang up a point for twenty years, which common sense would decide in as many minutes. It is the glorious privilege of the freemen of England to make their own laws, and they have made so many, that they can neither count them up nor comprehend them. The parliament of England is without comparison the most voluminous author in the world; and there is such a happy ambiguity in its works, that its students have as much to say on the wrong side of every question as upon the right: In all cases of discussion it is one man's business to puzzle, and another's to explain, and though victory be ever so certain, it is agreed between the parties to make a long battle: There must be an extraordinary faculty
of

of expression in the law, when the only parts clearly understood are those which it has not committed to writing.

I shall say very little in this place upon the sacred profession of divinity: It is to be lamented that the church of England is not provided with a proper competency for all who are engaged in performing its functions; but I cannot close with their opinion, who are for stripping its dignities, and equalizing those splendid benefices, which are at once the glory and the support of its establishment. Levellers and reformers will always have the popular cry on their side, and I have good reason to know with what inveteracy a man is persecuted for an opinion which opposes it; and yet it is hard to give credit to the sincerity and disinterestedness of him who courts popularity, and deny it to the man who sacrifices his repose and stands the brunt of abuse in defence of what he believes to be the truth.

And now having fallen upon the mention of Popularity, I shall take leave to address that divinity with a few lines picked up from an obscure author, which, though below poetry, are not quite prose, and on that account pretty nearly suited to the level of their subject.

“ O Popularity,

- " O Popularity, thou giddy thing !
 " What grace or profit dost thou bring ?
 " Thou art not honesty, thou art not fame ;
 " I cannot call thee by a worthy name :
 " To say I hate thee were not true ;
 " Contempt is properly thy due ;
 " I cannot love thee and despise thee too.
- " Thou art no patriot, but the veriest cheat
 " That ever traffick'd in deceit ;
 " A state empiric, bellowing loud
 " Freedom and phrenzy to the mobbing crowd ;
 " And what can'st thou, if thou canst raise
 " Illuminations and huzzas,
 " Tho' half the city sunk in one bright blaze ?
- " A patriot ! no ; for thou dost hold in hate
 " The very peace and welfare of the state ;
 " When anarchy assaults the sovereign's throne,
 " Then is the day, the night thine own ;
 " Then is thy triumph, when the foe
 " Levels some dark insidious blow,
 " Or strong rebellion lays thy country low.
- " Thou canst affect humility to hide
 " Some deep device of monstrous pride ;
 " Conscience and charity pretend
 " For compassing some private end ;
 " And in a canting conventicle note
 " Long scripture passages canst quote,
 " When persecution rankles in thy throat.

" Thou

" Thou hast no sense of nature at thy heart,
 " No ear for science, and no eye for art,
 " Yet confidently dost decide at once
 " This man a wit, and that a dunce ;
 " And, (strange to tell !) howe'er unjust,
 " We take thy dictates upon trust,
 " For if the world will be deceiv'd, it must.

" In truth and justice thou hast no delight,
 " Virtue thou dost not know by sight ;
 " But, as the chymist by his skill
 " From dross and dregs a spirit can distill,
 " So from the prisons, or the stews,
 " Bullies, blasphemers, cheats or Jews
 " Shall turn to heroes, if they serve thy views.

" Thou dost but make a ladder of the mob,
 " Whereby to climb into some courtly job ;
 " There safe reposing, warm and snug,
 " Thou answer'st with a patient shrug,
 " Miscreants, begone ! who cares for you,
 " Ye base-born, brawling, clamorous crew ?
 " You've serv'd my turn, and, vagabonds, adieu !"

N° LXXXVI.

WHEN it had entered into the mind of Shakespear to form an historical play upon certain events in the reign of Henry the fourth of England, the character of the Prince of Wales recommended itself to his fancy, as likely to supply him with a fund of dramatic incidents; for what could invention have more happily suggested than this character, which history presented ready to his hands? a riotous disorderly young libertine, in whose nature lay hidden those seeds of heroism and ambition, which were to burst forth at once to the astonishment of the world and to achieve the conquest of France. This prince, whose character was destined to exhibit a revolution of so brilliant a sort, was not only in himself a very tempting hero for the dramatic poet, who delights in incidents of novelty and surprize, but also offered to his imagination a train of attendant characters, in the persons of his wild comrades and associates, which would be of themselves a drama. Here was a field for invention wide enough even for the genius of Shakespear to range in. All the humours, passions and extravagancies of human life might be brought

brought into the composition, and when he had grouped and personified them to his taste and liking, he had a leader ready to place at the head of the train, and the truth of history to give life and interest to his drama.

With these materials ready for creation the great artist sat down to his work; the canvass was spread before him, ample and capacious as the expanse of his own fancy; nature put her pencil into his hand, and he began to sketch. His first concern was to give a chief or captain to this gang of rioters; this would naturally be the first outline he drew. To fill up the drawing of this personage he conceived a voluptuary; in whose figure and character there should be an assemblage of comic qualities; in his person he should be plumed and blown up to the size of a *Silenus*; lazy, luxurious, in sensuality a satyr, in intemperance a bacchanalian: As he was to stand in the post of a ringleader amongst thieves and cutpurse, he made him a notorious liar, a swagging coward, vain-glorious, arbitrary, knavish, crafty, voracious of plunder, lavish of his gains, without credit, honour or honesty, and in debt to every body about him: As he was to be the chief seducer and misleader of the heir apparent of the crown, it was incumbent on the poet to qualify him for

that part in such a manner as should give probability and even a plea to the temptation; this was only to be done by the strongest touches and the highest colourings of a master; by hitting off a humour of so happy, so facetious and so alluring a cast, as should tempt even royalty to forget itself and virtue to turn reveller in his company. His lies, his vanity and his cowardice, too gross to deceive, were to be so ingenious as to give delight; his cunning evasions, his witty resources, his mock solemnity, his vapouring self-consequence, were to furnish a continual feast of laughter to his royal companion; he was not only to be witty himself, but the cause of wit in other people; a whetstone for raillery; a buffoon, whose very person was a jest: Compounded of these humours, Shakespear produced the character of *Sir John Falstaff*; a character, which neither ancient nor modern comedy has ever equalled, which was so much the favourite of its author as to be introduced in three several plays, and which is likely to be the idol of the English stage, as long as it shall speak the language of Shakespear.

This character almost singly supports the whole comic plot of the first part of Henry the fourth; the poet has indeed thrown in some auxiliary humours in the persons of Gadshill,

Peto,

Peto, Bardolph, and Hostess Quickly; the two first serve for little else except to fill up the action, but Bardolph as a butt to Falstaff's railery, and the hostess in her wrangling scene with him, when his pockets had been emptied as he was asleep in the tavern, give occasion to scenes of infinite pleasantry: Poins is contrasted from the rest of the gang, and as he is made the companion of the prince, is very properly represented as a man of better qualities and morals than Falstaff's more immediate hangers-on and dependants.

The humour of Falstaff opens into full display upon his very first introduction with the prince; the incident of the robbery on the highway, the scene in Eastcheap in consequence of that ridiculous encounter, and the whole of his conduct during the action with Percy, are so exquisitely pleasant, that upon the renovation of his dramatic life in the second part of Henry the fourth, I question if the humour does not in part evaporate by continuation; at least I am persuaded that it flattens a little in the outset, and though his wit may not flow less copiously, yet it comes with more labour and is farther fetcht. The poet seems to have been sensible how difficult it was to preserve the vein as rich as at first, and has therefore strengthened his comic plot in the

second play with several new recruits, who may take a share with Falstaff, to whom he no longer entrusts the whole burthen of the humour. In the front of these auxiliaries stands Pistol, a character so new, whimsical and extravagant, that if it were not for a commentator now living, whose very extraordinary researches, amongst our old authors, have supplied us with passages to illuminate the strange rhapsodies which Shakespear has put into his mouth, I should for one have thought Antient Pistol as wild and imaginary a being as Caliban; but I now perceive, by the help of these discoveries, that the character is *made up in great part of absurd and jestian passages from many plays, in which Shakespear was versed and perhaps had been a performer*: Pistol's dialogue is a tissue of old tags of bombast, like the middle comedy of the Greeks, which dealt in parody. I abate of my astonishment at the invention and originality of the poet, but it does not lessen my respect for his ingenuity. Shakespear founded his bully in parody, Jonson copied his from nature, and the palm seems due to Bobadil upon a comparison with Pistol; Congreve copied a very happy likeness from Jonson, and by the fairest and most laudable imitation produced his Noll Bluff, one of the pleasantest humourists on the comic stage.

Shallow and Silence are two very strong auxiliaries to this second part of Falstaff's humours, and though they do not absolutely belong to his family, they are nevertheless near of kin, and derivatives from his stock: Surely two pleasanter fellows never trode the stage; they not only contrast and play upon each other, but Silence sober and Silence tipsy make the most comical reverse in nature; never was drunkenness so well introduced or so happily employed in any drama: The dialogue between Shallow and Falstaff, and the description given by the latter of Shallow's youthful frolicks, are as true nature and as true comedy as man's invention ever produced: The recruits are also in the literal sense the recruits of the drama. These personages have the further merit of throwing Falstaff's character into a new cast, and giving it the seasonable relief of variety.

Dame Quickly also in this second part resumes her rôle with great comic spirit, but with some variation of character for the purpose of introducing a new member into the troop in the person of Doll Tearsheet, the common trull of the times. Though this part is very strongly coloured, and though the scene with her and Falstaff is of a loose as well as ludicrous nature, yet if we compare Shakespear's conduct of this in-

cident with that of the dramatic writers of his time, and even since his time, we must confess he has managed it with more than common care, and exhibited his comic hero in a very ridiculous light, without any of those gross indecencies which the poets of his age indulged themselves in without restraint.

The humour of the Prince of Wales is not so free and unconstrained as in the first part; though he still demeans himself in the course of his revels, yet it is with frequent marks of repugnance and self-consideration, as becomes the conqueror of Percy, and we see his character approaching fast towards a thorough reformation; but though we are thus prepared for the change that is to happen, when this young hero throws off the reveller and assumes the king, yet we are not fortified against the weakness of pity; when the disappointment and banishment of Falstaff takes place, and the poet executes justice upon his inimitable delinquent, with all the rigour of an unrelenting moralist. The reader or spectator, who has accompanied Falstaff through his dramatic story, is in debt to him for so many pleasant moments, that all his failings, which should have raised contempt, have only provoked laughter, and he begins to think they are not natural to his character, but
assumed

assumed for his amusement. With these impressions we see him delivered over to mortification and disgrace, and bewail his punishment with a sensibility, that is only due to the sufferings of the virtuous.

As it is impossible to ascertain the limits of Shakespear's genius, I will not presume to say he could not have supported his humour, had he chosen to have prolonged his existence thro' the succeeding drama of Henry the Fifth; we may conclude, that no ready expedient presented itself to his fancy, and he was not apt to spend much pains in searching for such: He therefore put him to death, by which he fairly placed him out of the reach of his contemporaries, and got rid of the trouble and difficulty of keeping him up to his original pitch, if he had attempted to carry him through a third drama, after he had removed the Prince of Wales out of his company, and seated him on the throne. I cannot doubt but there were resources in Shakespear's genius, and a latitude of humour in the character of Falstaff, which might have furnished scenes of admirable comedy by exhibiting him in his disgrace, and both Shallow and Silence would have been accessaries to his pleasantry: Even the field of Agincourt, and the distress of the king's army before

before the action, had the poet thought proper to have produced Falstaff on the scene, might have been as fruitful in comic incidents as the battle of Shrewsbury; this we can readily believe from the humours of Fluellen and Pistol, which he has woven into his drama; the former of whom is made to remind us of Falstaff, in his dialogue with Captain Gower, when he tells him that — *As Alexander is kill his friend Clytus, being in his ales and his cups, so also Harry Monmouth, being in his right wits and his good judgments, is turn away the fat Knight with the great pelly-doublet: He was full of jests and gypes and knaveries, and mocks; I am forget his name. — Sir John Falstaff. — That is he.* — This passage has ever given me a pleasing sensation, as it marks a regret in the poet to part with a favourite character, and is a tender farewell to his memory: It is also with particular propriety that these words are put into the mouth of Fluellen, who stands here as his substitute, and whose humour, as well as that of Nym, may be said to have arisen out of the ashes of Falstaff.

N^o LXXXVII.*Singula lætus**Exquirique, auditque, virum monumenta priorum.*

(VIRGIL.)

OF all our dealers in second-hand wares, few bring their goods to so bad a market, as those humble wits who retail other people's worn-out jokes. A man's good sayings are so personally his own, and depend so much upon manner and circumstances, that they make a poor figure in other people's mouths, and suffer even more by printing than they do by repeating: It is also a very difficult thing to pen a witticism; for by the time we have adjusted all the descriptive arrangements of *this man said*, and *t'other man replied*, we have miserably blunted the edge of the repartee. These difficulties however have been happily overcome by *Mr. Joseph Miller* and other facetious compilers, whose works are in general circulation, and may be heard of in most clubs and companies where gentlemen meet, who love to say a good thing without the trouble of inventing it. We are also in a fair train of knowing every thing that a *late celebrated author* said, as well

as

as wrote, without an exception even of his most secret ejaculations. We may judge how valuable these diaries will be to posterity, when we reflect how much we should now be edified, had any of the antients given us as minute a *colleſtanea* of their illuſtrious contemporaries.

We have, it is true, a few of *Cicero's* table-jokes; but how delightful would it be to know what he ſaid, when nobody heard him! how piously he reproached himſelf when he laid in bed too late in a morning, or eat too heartily at *Hortenſius's* or *Cæſar's* table. We are told indeed that *Cato the Cenſor* loved his jeſt, but we ſhould have been doubly glad to have partaken of it: What a pity it is that nobody thought it worth their while to record ſome pleaſanter ſpecimen than *Macrobius* has given us of his retort upon *Q. Albidius*, a glutton and a ſpendthrift, when his houſe was on fire—*What he could not eat, he has burnt*, ſaid *Cato*; where the point of the jeſt lies in the alluſion to a particular kind of ſacrifice, and the good-humour of it with himſelf. It was better ſaid by *P. Syrus* the actor, when he ſaw one *Mucius*, a malevolent fellow, in a very melancholy mood—*Either ſome ill fortune has befallen Mucius, or ſome good has happened to one of his acquaintance.*

A man's

A man's fame shall be recorded to posterity by the trifling merit of a jest, when the great things he has done would else have been buried in oblivion: Who would now have known that *L. Mallius* was once the best painter in Rome, if it was not for his repartee to *Servilius Geminus*?—*You paint better than you model*, says *Geminus*, pointing to *Mallius's* children, who were crooked and ill-favoured.—*Like enough*, replied the artist; *I paint in the daylight, but I model, as you call it, in the dark.*

Cicero it is well known was a great joker, and some of his good sayings have reached us; it does not appear as if his wit had been of the malicious sort, and yet *Pompey*, whose temper could not stand a jest, was so galled by him, that he is reported to have said with great bitterness—*Oh! that Cicero would go over to my enemies, for then he would be afraid of me.*—If *Cicero* forgave this sarcasm, I should call him not only a better-tempered, but a braver man than *Pompey*.

But of all the antient wits *Augustus* seems to have had most point, and he was as remarkable for taking a jest, as for giving it. A country fellow came to Rome, who was so like the emperor, that all the city ran after him; *Augustus* heard of it, and ordering the man into his presence

sence—*Harkye, friend!* says he; *when was your mother in Rome?*—*Never, an please you!* replied the countryman, *but my father has been here many a time and oft.* The anecdote of the old soldier is still more to his credit: He solicited the emperor to defend him in a suit; *Augustus* sent his own advocate into court; the soldier was dissatisfied, and said to the emperor—*I did not fight for you by proxy at Actium—Augustus* felt the reproof, and condescended to his request in person. When *Pacuvius Taurus* greedily solicited a largess from the emperor, and to urge him to the greater liberality added, that all the world would have it, that he had made him a very bountiful donation—*But you know better,* said *Augustus,* *than to believe the world*—and dismissed the sycophant without his errand. I shall mention one more case, where, by a very courtly evasion, he parried the solicitation of his captain of the guard, who had been cashiered, and was petitioning the emperor to allow him his pay; telling him that he did not ask that indulgence for the sake of the money which might accrue to him, but that he might have it to say he had resigned his commission, and not been cashiered—*If that be all your reason,* says the emperor, *tell*
she

the world that you have received it, and I will not deny that I have paid it.

Vatinius, who was noted to a proverb as a common slanderer, and particularly obnoxious for his scurrility against *Cicero*, was pelted by the populace in the amphitheatre, whilst he was giving them the Gladiators: He complained to the *Ædiles* of the insult, and got an edict forbidding the people to cast any thing into the arena but apples. An arch fellow brought a furious large fir-apple to the famous lawyer *Cascellius*, and demanded his opinion upon the edict. — *I am of opinion*, says *Cascellius*, *that your fir-apple is literally and legally an apple, with this proviso however, that you intend to throw it at Vatinius's head.*

As there is some danger in making too free with *old jokes*, I shall hold my hand for the present; but if these should succeed in being acceptable to my readers, I shall not be afraid of meeting *Mr. Joseph Miller* and his modern witticisms with my antients. In that case I shall not despair of being able to lay before the public a veritable Roman newspaper, compounded of events in the days of *Julius Cæsar*: By what happy chance I traced this valuable relic, and with what pains I possessed myself of it, may be matter of future explanation:

I have

I have the satisfaction however to premise to the reader, that it is written with great freedom, and as well sprinkled with private anecdotes, as any of the present day, whose agreeable familiarity is so charming to every body but the parties concerned: It has also a good dash of the dramatic; and as some fastidious people have been inclined to treat our intelligencers and reviewers with a degree of neglect bordering upon contempt, I shall have pleasure in shewing that they have classical authority for all their quirks and conceits, and that they are all written in the true quaint spirit of criticism: It is to be lamented that the Roman theatre furnishes no ladies to match the heroines of our stage; but I can produce some encomiums upon *Laberius*, *Roscius* and the famous *Publius Syrus*, which would not be unapplicable to some of our present capital actors: I am sorry to be obliged to confess, that they were not in the habit of speaking epilogues in those days; but I have a substitute in a prologue written and spoken by *Decimus Laberius*, which I am tempted to throw out as a lure to my newspaper; but I must first explain upon what occasion it was composed.

This *Laberius* was a Roman knight of good
 11 family,

family, and a man withal of high spirit and pretensions, but unfortunately he had a talent for the drama : He read his own plays better than any man then living could act them, for neither *Garrick* nor *Henderson* were yet born. *P. Clodius*, the fine gentleman and rake of the age, had the indecorum to press *Laberius* to come forward on the public stage, and take the principal character in one of his own plays : *Laberius* was indignant, and *Clodius* proceeded to menaces :—*Do your worst*, says the Roman knight, *you can but send me to Dyracchium and back again*—proudly intimating that he would suffer the like banishment with *Cicero* rather than consent to his demand ; for acting was not then the amusement of people of fashion, and private theatres were not thought of. *Julius Cæsar* was no less captivated with *Laberius*'s talents than *Clodius* had been, and being a man not apt to be discouraged by common difficulties, took up the same solicitation, and assailed our Roman knight, who was now sixty years of age, and felt his powers in their decline : Conscious of this decline no less than of his own dignity, he resisted the degrading request ; he interceded, he implored of *Cæsar* to excuse him : It was to no purpose, *Cæsar* had made it his point, and his point he would carry : The word of *Cæsar* was law, and *Laberius*,

driven out of all his defences, was obliged to submit and comply. *Cæsar* makes a grand spectacle for all Rome ; bills are given out for a play of *Laberius*, and the principal part is announced to be performed by the author himself : The theatre is thronged with spectators ; all Rome is present, and *Decimus Laberius* presents himself on the stage, and addresses the audience in the following prologue :

“ *Prologue by DECIMUS LABERIUS.*

“ O strong Necessity ! of whose swift course

“ So many feel, so few escape the force,

“ Whither, ah ! whither, in thy prone career,

“ Hast thou decreed this dying frame to bear ?

“ Me in my better days nor foe, nor friend,

“ Nor threat, nor bribe, nor vanity cou'd bend ;

“ Now lur'd by flattery in my weaker age,

“ I sink my knighthood and ascend the stage.

“ Yet muse not therefore---How shall man gainsay,

“ Him, whom the Deities themselves obey ?

“ Sixty long years I've liv'd without disgrace

“ A Roman knight ; let dignity give place !

“ I'm *Cæsar's* actor now, and compass more

“ In one short hour, than all my life before.

“ O Fortune ! fickle source of good and ill,

“ If here to place me 'twas thy sovereign will,

“ Why, when I'd youth and faculties to please

“ So great a master and such guests as these,

“ Why

" Why not compel me then, malicious power !
 " To the hard task of this degrading hour ?
 " Where now, in what profound abyfs of shame,
 " Dost thou conspire with Fate to sink my name ?
 " Whence are my hopes ? What voice can age supply
 " To charm the ear ; what grace to please the eye ?
 " Where is the action, energy, and art,
 " The look, that guides its passion to the heart ?
 " Age creeps like ivy o'er my wither'd trunk,
 " Its bloom all blasted, and its vigour shrunk ;
 " A tomb, where nothing but a name remains
 " To tell the world whose ashes it contains."

The original is so superiorly beautiful, that to prevent a bathos I shall insert it after the translation.

NECESSITAS, *cujus cursus transversus impetum*
Voluerunt multi effugere, pauci potuerunt,
Quò me detrusit pœne extremis sensibus ?
Quem nulla ambitio, nulla unquam largitio,
Nullus timor, vis nulla, nulla auctoritas
Movere potuit in juventa de statu ;
Ecce in senecta ut facile labefecit loco
Viri excellentis mente clemente edita
Submissa placidè blandiloquens oratio !
Etenim ipsi Dii negare cui nihil potuerunt,
Hominem me denegare quis posset pati ?
Ergo bis tricenis annis actis sine nota
Eques Romanus lare egressus meo
Domum revertas mimas ! Nimirum hoc dixi
Uno plus vixi mihi quam vivendum fuit.
Fortuna, immoderata in bono æque atque in malo,

*Si tibi erat libitum literarum laudibus
 Floris cacumen nostræ famæ frangere,
 Cur cum vigebam membris præviridantibus,
 Satisfacere populo et tali cum poteram viro,
 Non flexibilem me concurvasi ut carperes?
 Nunc me quo dejicis? quid ad scenam affero?
 Decorem formæ, an dignitatem corporis,
 Animi virtutem, an vocis jucundæ sonum?
 Ut hedera serpens vires arboreas necat,
 Ita me vetustas amplexa annorum enecat:
 Sepulchri similis nihil nisi nomen retines.*

The play which this pathetic prologue was attached to was a comedy, in which *Laberius* took the character of a slave, and in the course of the plot (as usual) was beaten by his master: In this condition, having marked his habit with counterfeited stripes, he runs upon the stage; and cries out amain—*Porro, Quirites! libertatem perdimus*—In good faith, Countrymen, there is an end of freedom. The indignant spectators sent up a shout; it was in the language of our present playhouse bills, *a burst of applause; a most violent burst of applause from a most crowded and brilliant house, overflowing in all parts.* *Laberius* not yet content with this atonement to the manes of his knighthood, subjoins the following pointed allusion: *Necesse est multos timeat, quem multi timent*—The man, whom many fear, must needs fear many. All eyes were now turned

turned upon *Cæsar*, and the degraded *Laberius* enjoyed a full revenge.

We may naturally suppose this conduct lost him the favour of *Cæsar*, who immediately took up *Publius Syrus*, a Syrian slave, who had been manumitted for his ingenious talents, and was acting in the country theatres with much applause: *Cæsar* fetched him out of his obscurity, as we bring up an actress from Bath or York, and pitted him against *Laberius*. It was the triumph of youth and vigour over age and decay, and *Cæsar* with malicious civility said to *Laberius*, *Favente tibi me victus es, Laberi, a Syro—You are surpassed by Syrus in spite of my support.* As *Laberius* was going out of the theatre he was met by *Syrus*, who was inconsiderate enough to let an expression escape him, which was very disrespectful to his veteran competitor: *Laberius* felt the unbecoming insult, and, turning to *Syrus*, gave him this extemporary answer—

“ To stand the first is not the lot of all ;
 “ ’Tis now your turn to mount, and mine to fall ;
 “ ’Tis slippery ground ; beware you keep your feet ;
 “ For public favour is a public cheat.”

*Non possunt primi esse omnes omni in tempore ;
 Summum ad gradum cum claritatis veneris,
 Consistas ægre ; et quam descendas, decides :
 Cecidi ego : Cadet qui sequitur. Laus est publica.*

I need not remind the learned Reader in what credit the sayings of this *Publius Syrus* have been justly held by all the *literati* from *Seneca* to *Scaliger*, who turned them into Greek; and it is for the honour of the fraternity of the stage, that both he and *Sophron*, whose moral sentences were found under *Plato's* pillow when he died, were actors by profession.

I shall now only add that my Newspaper contains a very interesting description of two young actors, *Hylas* and *Pylades*, who became great favourites with *Augustus*, when he was emperor, and made their first appearance at the time this journal was written. If the Reader shall find any allusion to two very promising young performers, now living, whose initials correspond with the above, I can promise him that our contemporaries will not suffer by the comparison. I may venture to say in the words of Doctor Young—

The Roman won'd not blush at the mistake.

N° LXXXVIII.

DR. Samuel Johnson, in his life of Rowe, pronounces of *The Fair Penitent*, that it is one of the most pleasing tragedies on the stage, where it still keeps its turns of appearing, and probably will long keep them, for that there is scarcely any work of any poet at once so interesting by the fable, and so delightful by the language. The story, he observes, is domestic, and therefore easily received by the imagination, and assimilated to common life; the diction is exquisitely harmonious, and soft or sprightly as occasion requires. Few people, I believe, will think this character of *The Fair Penitent* too lavish on the score of commendation; the high degree of public favour in which this tragedy has long stood, has ever attracted the best audiences to it, and engaged the talents of the best performers in its display. As there is no drama more frequently exhibited, or more generally read, I propose to give it a fair and impartial examination, jointly with the more unknown and less popular tragedy from which it is derived.

The Fair Penitent is in fable and character so closely copied from *The Fatal Dowry*, that it is impossible not to take that tragedy along with it; and it is matter of some surprize to me that Rowe

should have made no acknowledgment of his imitation either in his dedication or prologue, or any where else that I am apprised of.

This tragedy of *The Fatal Dowry* was the joint production of Massinger and Nathaniel Field; it takes a wider compass of fable than *The False Penitent*, by which means it presents a very affecting scene at the opening, which discovers young Charalois attended by his friend Romont, waiting with a petition in his hand to be presented to the judges, when they shall meet, praying the release of his dead father's body, which had been seized by his creditors; and detained in their hands for debts he had incurred in the public service, as Field Marshal of the armies of Burgundy. Massinger, to whose share this part of the tragedy devolved, has managed this pathetic introduction with consummate skill and great expression of nature; a noble youth in the last state of worldly distress, reduced to the humiliating yet pious office of soliciting an unfeeling and unfriendly judge to allow him to pay the solemn rites of burial to the remains of an illustrious father, who had fought his country's battles with glory, and had sacrificed life and fortune in defence of an ingrateful state, impresses the spectators mind with pity and respect, which are felt through every passage of the play: One thing
in

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in particular strikes me at the opening of the scene, which is the long silence that the poet has artfully imposed upon his principal character (Charalois) who stands in mute sorrow with his petition in his hand, whilst his friend Romont, and his advocate Charmi, urge him to present himself to the judges and solicit them in person : The judges now make their entrance, they stop upon the stage ; they offer him the fairest opportunity for tendering his petition and soliciting his suit : Charalois remains fixed and speechless ; Romont, who is all eagerness in his cause, presses him again and again—

Now put on your spirits—

Now, Sir, lose not this offer'd means : Their looks

Fix'd on you with a pitying earnestness,

Invite you to demand their furtherance

To your good purpose.

The judges point him out to each other; they lament the misfortunes of his noble house; they observe,

It is young Charalois

Son to the Marshal, from whom he inherits

His fame and virtues only.

Romont. *Hah ! they name you.*

Dulroy. *His father died in prison two days since.*

Rochfort. *Yes, to the shame of this ingrateful state,*

That such a master in the art of war,

*So noble and so highly marking
 From this forgetful country, should, for want
 Of means to satisfy his creditors
 The sum he took up for the general good,
 Meet with an end so infamous.*

Romont. *Dare you ever hope for like opportunity ?*

It is in vain; the opportunity passes off, and Charalois opens not his mouth, nor even silently tenders his petition.

I have, upon a former occasion, both generally and particularly observed upon the effects of dramatic silence; the stage cannot afford a more beautiful and touching instance than this befort us: To say it is not inferior to the silence of Hamlet upon his first appearance, would be saying too little in its favour. I have no doubt but Massinger had this very case in his thoughts, and I honour him no less for the imitating, than I should have done for striking out a silence so naturally and so delicately preserved. What could Charalois have uttered to give him that interest in the hearts of his spectators, which their own conclusions during his affecting silence have already impressed? No sooner are the judges gone, than the ardent Romont again breaks forth—

*This obstinate spleen
 You think becomes your sorrow, and sorts well
 With your black suits.*

This

This is Hamlet himself, his *inky cloak*, and *customary suits of solemn black*. The character of Charalois is thus fixed before he speaks; the poet's art has given the prejudice that is to bear him in our affections through all the succeeding events of the fable; and a striking contrast is established between the undiscerning fiery zeal of Romont, and Charalois' fine sensibility and high-born dignity of soul.

A more methodical and regular dramatist would have stopped here, satisfied that the impression already made was fully sufficient for all the purposes of his plot; but Massinger, according to the busy spirit of the stage for which he wrote, is not alarmed by a throng of incidents, and proceeds to open the court and discuss the pleadings on the stage: The advocate Charmi in a set harangue moves the judges for dispensing with the rigour of the law in favour of creditors, and for rescuing the Marshal's corpse out of their clutches; he is brow-beaten and silenced by the presiding judge old Novall: The plea is then taken up by the impetuous Romont, and urged with so much personal insolence, that he is arrested on the spot, put in charge of the officers of the court, and taken to prison. This is a very striking mode of introducing the set oration of Charalois; a son recounting the military achievements of a newly deceased

deceased father, and imploring mercy from his creditors and the law towards his unburied remains, now claims the attention of the court, who had been hitherto unmoved by the feeble formality of a hired pleader, and the turbulent passion of an enraged soldier. Charalois' argument takes a middle course between both; the pious feelings of a son, tempered by the modest manners of a gentleman: The creditors however are implacable, the judge is hostile, and the law must take its course.

Creditor. *'Tis the city's doctrine ;
We stand bound to maintain it.*
Charalois. *Be constant in it ;
And since you are as merciless in your natures,
As base and mercenary in your means
By which you get your wealth, I will not urge
The court to take away one scruple from
The right of their laws, or one good thought
In you to mend your disposition with.
I know there is no music in your ears
So pleasing as the groans of men in prison,
And that the tears of widows, and the cries
Of famish'd orphans, are the feasts that take you ;
That to be in your danger with more care
Should be avoided than infectious air,
The loath'd embraces of diseased women,
A flatterer's poison, or the loss of honour.
Yet rather than my father's reverend dust
Shall want a place in that fair monument,
In which our noble ancestors lie entomb'd,*

Before

*Before the court I offer up myself
A prisoner for it : Load me with those irons
That have worn out his life ; in my best strength
I'll run to the encounter of cold hunger,
And choose my dwelling where no sun dares enter,
So he may be releas'd.*

There was yet another incident, which the poet's passion for business and spectacle induced him to avail himself of, viz. the funeral of the Marshal; this he displays on the stage, with a train of captains and soldiers following the body of their general: Charalois and Romont, under custody of their jailors, appear as chief mourners, and a party of creditors are concerned in the groupe.

After this solemnity is dispatched, the poet proceeds to develop the amiable generosity of old Rochfort, who being touched with the gallant spirit of Romont, and still more penetrated with the filial piety of young Charalois, delivers them both from imprisonment and distress, by discharging the debts of the Marshal and dismissing the creditors: This also passes before the eyes of the spectators. Before Charalois has given full expression to his gratitude for this extraordinary benefaction, Rochfort follows it with a further act of bounty, which he introduces in the stile of a request—

Call

*Call in my daughter—Still I have a suit to you,
Would you requite me—
This is my only child.*

Beaumelle, Rochfort's daughter, is presented to Charalois; the scene is hurried on with a precipitation almost without example: Charalois asks the lady,

Fair Beaumelle, can you love me?

Beaumelle. Yes, my lord.

*Charalois. You need not question me if I can you:
You are the fairest virgin in Dijon,
And Rochfort is your father.*

The match is agreed upon as soon as proposed, and Rochfort hastens away to prepare the celebration.

In this cluster of incidents I must not fail to remark, that the poet introduces young Novall upon the scene, in the very moment when the short dialogue above quoted was passing: This Novall had before been exhibited as a suitor to Beaumelle, and his vain frivolous character had been displayed in a very ridiculous and contemptible light; he is now again introduced to be a witness of his own disappointment, and his only observation upon it is—*What's this change?*—Upon the exit of the father however he addresses himself to the lady, and her reply gives the alarm—

ing hint, that makes discovery of the fatal turn which the plot is now about to take; for when Novall turning aside to Beaumelle, by one word—*Mistress!*—conveys the reproach of inconstancy, she replies,

*Oh, Servant! Virtue strengthen me!
Thy presence blows round my affection's vane:
You will undo me if you speak again. (Exit.)*

Young Novall is left on the scene with certain followers and dependants, which hang upon his fortune, one of which (Pontalier by name) a man under deep obligations to him, yet of an honest nature, advises him to an honourable renunciation of all further hopes or attempts to avail himself of the affections of Beaumelle—

*Tho' you have sav'd my life,
Rescu'd me often from my wants, I must not
Wink at your follies, that will ruin you.
You know my blunt way, and my love to truth:
For sake the pursuit of this lady's honour,
Now you do see her made another man's.*

This honourable advice is rejected with contempt: Novall, in whose mean bosom there does not seem a trace of virtue, avows a determined perverance; and the poet having in this hasty manner compleated these inauspicious nuptials, closes the second act of his tragedy.

N^o LXXXIX.

WE have now expended two entire acts of *The Fatal Dowry* in advancing to that period in the fable, at which the tragedy of *The Fair Penitent* opens. If the author of this tragedy thought it necessary to contract Massinger's plot, and found one upon it of a more regular construction, I know not how he could do this any otherwise than by taking up the story at the point where we have now left it, and throwing the antecedent matter into narration; and though these two prefatory acts are full of very affecting incidents, yet the pathos, which properly appertains to the plot and conduces to the catastrophe of the tragedy, does not in strictness take place before the event of the marriage. No critic will say that the pleadings before the judges, the interference of the creditors, the distresses of Charalois, or the funeral of the Marshal, are necessary parts of the drama; at the same time no reader will deny (and neither could Rowe himself overlook) the effect of these incidents: He could not fail to foresee that he was to sacrifice very much of the interest of his fable, when he was to throw that upon narration, which his original had given in spectacle; and the loss was more enhanced by
falling

falling upon the hero of the drama ; for who that compares Charalois, at the end of the second act of *Massinger*, with Rowe's Altamont at the opening scene of *The Fair Penitent*, can doubt which character has most interest with the spectators ? We have seen the former in all the most amiable offices which filial piety could perform ; enduring insults from his inveterate oppressors, and voluntarily surrendering himself to a prison to ransom the dead body of his father from unrelenting creditors. Altamont presents himself before us in his wedding suit, in the splendour of fortune and at the summit of happiness ; he greets us with a burst of exultation—

*Let this auspicious day be ever sacred,
No mourning, no misfortunes happen on it ;
Let it be mark'd for triumphs and rejoicings !
Let happy lovers ever make it holy,
Choose it to bless their hopes and crown their wishes ;
This happy day, that gives me my Calista !*

The rest of the scene is employed by him and Horatio alternately in recounting the benefits conferred upon them by the generous Sciolto ; and the very same incident of the seizure of his father's corpse by the creditors, and his redemption of it, is recited by Horatio—

*When his hard creditors,
 Urg'd and assisted by Lothario's father,
 (Foe to thy house and rival of their greatness)
 By sentence of the cruel law forbade
 His venerable corpse to rest in earth;
 Thou gav'st thyself a ransom for his bones;
 With piety uncommon didst give up
 Thy hopeful youth to slaves, who ne'er knew mercy.*

It is not however within the reach of this, or any other description, to place Altamont in that interesting and amiable light, as circumstances have already placed Charalois; the happy and exulting bridegroom may be an object of our congratulation, but the virtuous and suffering Charalois engages our pity, love and admiration. If Rowe would have his audience credit Altamont for that filial piety, which marks the character he copied from, it was a small oversight to put the following expression into his mouth—

Oh, great Sciolto! Oh, my more than father!

A closer attention to character would have reminded him that it was possible for Altamont to express his gratitude to Sciolto without setting him above a father, to whose memory he had paid such devotion.

From this contraction of his plot, by the defalcation of so many pathetic incidents; it became impossible

impossible for the author of the *Fair Penitent* to make his *Altamont* the hero of his tragedy, and the leading part is taken from him by *Horatio*, and even by *Lothario*, throughout the drama. There are several other reasons, which concur to sink *Altamont* upon the comparison with *Charalois*, the chief of which arises from the captivating colours in which *Rowe* has painted his libertine: On the contrary, *Maffinger* gives a contemptible picture of his young *Novall*; he makes him not only vicious, but ridiculous; in foppery and impertinence he is the counterpart of *Shakespear's* *Osrick*; vain-glorious, purse-proud, and overbearing amongst his dependants; a spiritless postroom in his interview with *Romont*: *Lothario* (as *Johnson* observes) *with gaiety which cannot be hated, and bravery which cannot be despised, retains too much of the spectator's kindness*. His high spirit, brilliant qualities and fine person are so described, as to put us in danger of false impressions in his favour, and to set the passions in opposition to the moral of the piece: I suspect that the gallantry of *Lothario* makes more advocates for *Calista* than she ought to have. There is another consideration, which operates against *Altamont*, and it is an indelicacy in his character, which the poet should have provided against: He marries *Calista* with the full

persuasion of her being averse to the match; in his first meeting with Sciolto he says—

*Oh! could I hope there was one thought of Altamont,
One kind remembrance in Calista's breast—*

——— *I found her cold*

*As a dead lover's statue on his tomb;
A rising storm of passion shook her breast,
Her eyes a piteous shower of tears let fall,
And then she sigh'd as if her heart were breaking.
With all the tenderest eloquence of love
I beg'd to be a sharer in her grief:
But she, with looks averse and eyes that froze me,
Sadly replied, her sorrows were her own,
Nor in a father's power to dispose of.*

I am aware that Sciolto attempts to parry these facts by an interpretation too gross and unbecoming for a father's character, and only fit for the lips of a Lothario; but yet it is not in nature to suppose that Altamont could mistake such symptoms, and it fixes a meanness upon him, which prevails against his character throughout the play. Nothing of this sort could be discovered by Massinger's bridegroom, for the ceremony was agreed upon and performed at the very first interview of the parties; Beaumelle gave a full and unreserved assent, and though her character suffers on the score of hypocrisy on that account, yet Charalois is saved by it: Less
hypocrisy

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hypocrisy appears in Calista, but hers is the deeper guilt, because she was already dishonoured by Lothario, and Beaumelle's coquetry with Novall had not yet reached the length of criminality. Add to this, that Altamont appears in the contemptible light of a suitor, whom Calista had apprized of her aversion, and to whom she had done a deliberate act of dishonour, though his person and character must have been long known to her. The case is far otherwise between Charalois and Beaumelle, who never met before, and every care is taken by the poet to save his hero from such a deliberate injury, as might convey contempt; with this view the marriage is precipitated; nothing is allowed to pass, that might open the character of Charalois to Beaumelle: She is hurried into an assignation with Novall immediately upon her marriage; every artifice of seduction is employed by her confidante Bellaperte, and Aymer the parasite of Novall, to make this meeting criminal; she falls the victim of passion, and when detection brings her to a sense of her guilt, she makes this penitent and pathetic appeal to Charalois—

Oh my fate!

*That never would consent that I should see
How worthy thou wert both of love and duty*

T 3

Before

*Before I lost you; and my misery made
 The glass, in which I now behold your virtue—
 With justice therefore you may cut me off,
 And from your memory wash the remembrance
 That e'er I was; like to some vicious purpose,
 Which in your better judgment you repent of,
 And study to forget—*

*—Yet you shall find,
 Tho' I was bold enough to be a strumpet,
 I dare not yet live one: Let those fam'd matrons,
 That are canoniz'd worthy of our sex,
 Transcend me in their sanctity of life,
 I yet will equal them in dying nobly,
 Ambitious of no honour after life,
 But that, when I am dead, you will forgive me.*

Compare this with the conduct of Calista, and then decide which frail fair-one has the better title to the appellation of a *Penitent*, and which drama conveys the better moral by its catastrophe.

There is indeed a grossness in the older poet, which his more modern imitator has refined; but he has only sweetened the poison, not removed its venom; nay, by how much more palatable he has made it, so much more pernicious it is become in his tempting sparkling cup, than in the coarse deterring dose of Massinger.

Rowe has no doubt greatly outstepped his original in the striking character of Lothario, who

who leaves Novall as far behind him as Charalois does Altamont: It is admitted then that Calista has as good a plea as any wanton could wish to urge for her criminality with Lothario, and the poet has not spared the ear of modesty in his exaggerated description of the guilty scene; every luxurious image, that his inflamed imagination could crowd into the glowing rhapsody, is there to be found, and the whole is recited in numbers so flowing and harmonious, that they not only arrest the passions but the memory also, and perhaps have been, and still can be, as generally repeated as any passage in English poetry. Massinger with less elegance, but not with less regard to decency, suffers the guilty act to pass within the course of his drama; the greater refinement of manners in Rowe's day did not allow of this, and he anticipated the incident; but when he revived the recollection of it by such a studied description, he plainly shewed that it was not from moral principle that he omitted it; and if he has presented his heroine to the spectators with more immediate delicacy during the compass of the play, he has at the same time given her greater depravity of mind; her manners may be more refined, but her principle is fouler than Beaumelle's. Calista, who yielded to the gallant gay Lothario, *but with the Tuscan grape*, might

perhaps have disdained a lover who addressed her in the holiday language which Novall uses to Beaumelle—

*Best day to Nature's curiosity!
 Star of Dijon, the lustre of all France!
 Perpetual Spring dwell on thy rosy cheeks,
 Whose breath is perfume to our continent;
 See, Flora trimm'd in her varieties!—
 No Autumn, nor no Age ever approach
 This heavenly piece, which Nature having wrought,
 She lost her needle, and did then despair
 Ever to work so lively and so fair.*

The letter of Calista (which brings about the discovery by the poor expedient of Lothario's dropping it and Horatio's finding it) has not even the merit of being characteristically wicked, and is both in its matter and mode below tragedy. It is *Lothario's cruelty has determined her to yield a perfect obedience to her father, and give her hand to Altamont, in spite of her weakness for the false Lothario.*—If the lady had given her *perfect obedience* its true denomination, she had called it a most dishonourable compliance; and if we may take Lothario's word (who seems full correct enough in describing facts and particulars) she had not much cause to complain of his being false; for he tells Rossano—

1 H 2

*I lik'd her, would have marry'd her,
But that it pleas'd her father to refuse me,
To make this honourable fool her husband.*

It appears by this that Lothario had not been *false* to her in the article of marriage, though he might have been *cruel* to her on the score of passion, which indeed is confess'd on his part with as much *cold indifference*, as the most barefaced avowal could express.—But to return to the letter: She proceeds to tell him—*that she could almost wish she had that heart, and that honour to bestow with it, which he has robbed her of*—But lest this half wish should startle him, she adds—*But oh ! I fear, could I retrieve them, I should again be undone by the too faithless, yet too lovely Lothario.*—This must be owned as full a reason as she could give why she should only *almost wish* for her lost honour, when she would make such an use of it, if she had it again at her disposal. And yet the very next paragraph throws every thing into contradiction, for she tells him—*this is the last weakness of her pen, and to-morrow shall be the last in which she will indulge her eyes.* If she could keep to that resolution, I must think the recovery of her innocence would have been worth a whole wish, and many a wish; unless we are to suppose she was so devoted to guilt,
that

that she could take delight in reflecting upon it: This is a state of depravity, which human nature hardly ever attains, and seems peculiar to Calista. She now grows very humble, and concludes in a stile well suited to her humility—*Lucilla shall conduct you, if you are kind enough to let me see you; it shall be the last trouble you shall meet with from —The lost Calista.*

It was very ill done of Horatio's curiosity to read this letter, and I must ever regret that he has so unhandsomely exposed a lady's private correspondence to the world.

N^o XC.

THOUGH the part which Horatio takes in the business of the drama is exactly that which falls to the share of Romont in the Fatal Dowry, yet their characters are of a very different cast; for as Rowe had bestowed the fire and impetuosity of Romont upon his Lothario, it was a very judicious opposition to contrast it with the cool deliberate courage of the sententious Horatio, the friend and brother-in-law of Altamont.

When

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When Horatio has read Calista's letter, which Lothario had dropped (an accident which more frequently happens to gentlemen in comedies than in tragedies) he falls into a very long meditation, and closes it with putting this question to himself:

*What if I give this paper to her father?
It follows that his justice dooms her dead,
And breaks his heart with sorrow; hard return
For all the good his hand has reap'd on us!
Hold, let me take a moment's thought—*

At this moment he is interrupted in his reflections by the presence of Lavinia, whose tender sollicitude fills up the remaining part of the dialogue, and concludes the act without any decisive resolution on the part of Horatio; an incident well contrived, and introduced with much dramatic skill and effect: Though pressed by his wife to disclose the cause of his uneasiness, he does not impart to her the fatal discovery he has made; this also is well in character. Upon his next entrance he has withdrawn himself from the company, and being alone, resumes his meditation—

*What, if, while all are here intent on revelling,
I privately went forth and sought Lothario?
This letter may be forg'd; perhaps the wantonness*

of

*Of his vain youth to stain a lady's fame;
 Perhaps his malice to disturb my friend.
 Oh! no, my heart forebodes it must be true.
 Melbought e'en now I mark'd the starts of guilt
 That shook her soul, tho' damn'd dissimulation
 Screen'd her dark thoughts, and set to public view
 A specious face of innocence and beauty.*

This soliloquy is succeeded by the much-admired and striking scene between him and Lothario; rigid criticism might wish to abridge some of the sententious declamatory speeches of Horatio, and shorten the dialogue to quicken the effect; but the moral sentiment and harmonious versification are much too charming to be treated as intruders, and the author has also struck upon a natural expedient for prolonging the dialogue, without any violence to probability, by the interposition of Rossano, who acts as a mediator between the hostile parties. This interposition is further necessary to prevent a decisive rencounter, for which the fable is not ripe; neither would it be proper for Horatio to anticipate that revenge, which is reserved for Altamont: The altercation therefore closes with a challenge from Lothario—

*West of the town a mile, amongst the rocks,
 Two hours ere noon to-morrow I expect thee;
 Thy single hand to mine.*

The

The place of meeting is not well ascertained, and the time is too long deferred for strict probability; there are however certain things in all dramas, which must not be too rigidly insisted upon, and provided no extraordinary violence is done to reason and common sense, the candid critic ought to let them pass: This I take to be a case in point; and though Horatio's cool courage and ready presence of mind are not just the qualities to reconcile us to such an oversight, yet I see no reason to be severe upon the incident, which is followed by his immediate recollection—

*Two hours ere noon to-morrow! Hah! Ere that
He sees Calista.—Oh! unthinking fool!
What if I urg'd her with the crime and danger?
If any spark from Heav'n remain unquench'd
Within her breast, my breath perhaps may wake it.
Could I but prosper there, I would not doubt
My combat with that loud vain-glorious boaster.*

Whether this be a measure altogether in character with a man of Horatio's good sense and discretion, I must own is matter of doubt with me. I think he appears fully satisfied of her actual criminality; and in that case it would be more natural for him to lay his measures for intercepting Lothario, and preventing the assassination, than to try his rhetoric in the present crisis

crisis upon the agitated mind of Calista. As it has justly occurred to him, that he has been over-reached by Lothario in the postponement of the duel, the measure I suggest would naturally tend to hasten that rencounter. Now, though the business of the drama may require an explanation between Horatio and Calista, whereupon to ground an occasion for his interesting quarrel with Altamont, yet I do not see any necessity to make that a premeditated explanation, nor to sacrifice character by a measure that is inconsistent with the better judgment of Horatio. The poet, however, has decreed it otherwise, and a deliberate interview with Calista and Horatio accordingly takes place. This, although introduced with a solemn invocation on his part, is very clumsily conducted—

*Teach me, some Power! that happy art of speech
To dress my purpose up in gracious words,
Such as may softly steal upon her soul,
And never awaken the tempestuous passions.*

Who can expect, after this preparation, to hear Horatio thus break his secret to Calista?

*Lothario and Calista!—Thus they join
Two names, which Heav'n decreed should never meet.
Hence have the talkers of this populous city
A shameful*

*A shameful tale to tell for public sport;
Of an unhappy beauty, a false fair-one;
Who plighted to a noble youth her faith;
When she had given her honour to a wretch.*

This I hold to be totally out of nature; first, because it is a palpable departure from his resolution to use *gracious words*; next, because it has a certain tendency to produce rage and not repentance; and thirdly, because it is founded in exaggeration and falsehood; for how is he warranted to say that the story is the public talk and sport of the city? If it were so, what can his interference avail? why seek this interview?

*Why come to tell her how she might be happy?
To sooth the secret anguish of her soul?
To comfort that fair mourner, that forlorn one,
And teach her steps to know the paths of peace?*

No judge of nature will think he takes the means to lead her into the *paths of peace*, by hurrying her to the very brink of desperation. I need not enlarge upon this observation, and shall therefore only remark, that the scene breaks up, as might be expected, with the following proof of her penitence, and his success in persuasion—

Henceforth,

*Henceforth, thou officious fool,
Meddle no more, nor dare, ev'n on thy life,
To breathe an accent that may touch my virtue :
I am myself the guardian of my honour,
And will not bear so insolent a monitor.*

Let us now enquire how Romont (the Horatio of Massinger) conducts this incident, a character from whom less discretion is to be expected than from his philosophical successor, Romont himself discovers Beaumelle and Novall engaged in the most wanton familiarities, and, with a warmth suitable to his zeal, breaks up the amorous conference by driving Novall off the scene with ineffable contempt; he then applies himself to the lady, and with a very natural and manly spirit says,

— *I respect you
Not for yourself, but in remembrance of
Who is your father, and whose wife you now are.*

She replies to him with contempt and ridicule; he resumes the same characteristic strain he set out with, and proceeds—

*My intent,
Madam, deserve not this; nor do I stay
To be the whetstone of your wit: Preserve it
To spend on such as know how to admire
Such colour'd stuff. In me there is now speaks to you*

As

*As true a friend and servant to your honour,
And one that will with as much hazard guard it,
As ever man did goodness. But then, lady,
You must endeavour, not alone to be,
But to appear worthy such love and service.*

We have just now heard Horatio reproach Calista with the reports that were circulated against her reputation; let us compare it with what Romont says upon the same subject—

*But yet be careful!
Detraction's a bold monster, and fears not
To wound the fame of princes, if it find
But any blemish in their lives to work on.
But I'll be plainer with you: Had the people
Been learnt to speak but what even now I saw,
Their malice out of that would raise an engine
To overthrow your honour. In my sight,
With yonder painted fool I frighted from you,
You us'd familiarity beyond
A modest entertainment: You embrac'd him
With too much ardour for a stranger, and
Met him with kisses neither chaste nor comely:
But learn you to forget him, as I will
Your bounties to him; you will find it safer
Rather to be uncourtly than immodest.*

What avails it to attempt drawing a comparison between this conduct and that of Horatio's, where no comparison is to be made? I

leave it to the reader, and decline a task at once so unnecessary and ungrateful.

When Romont finds no impression is to be made upon Beaumelle, he meets her father, and immediately falls into the same reflection that Horatio had struck upon—

*Her father!—Hah!
How if I break this to him? Sure it cannot
Meet with an ill construction. His wisdom,
Made powerful by the authority of a father,
Will warrant and give privilege to his counsels.
It shall be so.*

If this step needs excuse, the reader will consider that it is a step of prevention. The experiment however fails, and he is rebuffed with some asperity by Rochfort; this draws on a scene between him and Charalois, which, as it is too long to transcribe, so it is throughout too excellent to extract any part from it. I can only express my surprize, that the author of *The Fair Penitent*, with this scene before him, could conduct his interview between Altamont and Horatio upon a plan so widely different, and so much inferior: I must suppose he thought it a strong incident to make Altamont give a blow to his friend, else he might have seen an interview carried on with infinitely
more

more spirit, both of language and character, between Charalois and Romont, in circumstances exactly similar, where no such violence was committed, or even meditated. Was it because Pierre had given a blow to Jaffier, that Altamont was to repeat the like indignity to Horatio, for a woman, of whose aversion he had proofs not to be mistaken? Charalois is a character at least as high and irritable as Altamont, and Romont is out of all comparison more rough and plain-spoken than Horatio: Charalois might be deceived into an opinion of Beaumelle's affection for him; Altamont could not deceive himself into such a notion, and the lady had testified her dislike of him in the strongest terms, accompanied with symptoms which he himself had described as indicating some rooted and concealed affliction: Could any solution be more natural than what Horatio gives? Novall was a rival so contemptible, that Charalois could not, with any degree of probability, consider him as an object of his jealousy; it would have been a degradation of his character, had he yielded to such a suspicion: Lothario, on the contrary, was of all men living the most to be apprehended by a husband, let his confidence or vanity be ever so great. Rowe, in his attempt to *surprize*, has sacrificed

nature and the truth of character for stage-effect; Massinger, by preserving both nature and character, has conducted his friends through an angry altercation with infinitely more spirit, more pathos and more dramatic effect, and yet dismissed them with the following animated and affecting speech from Charalois to his friend :

*Thou'rt not my friend;
Or being so, thou'rt mad. I must not buy
Thy friendship at this rate. Had I just cause,
Thou know'st I durst pursue such injury
Thro' fire, air, water, earth, nay, were they all
Shuffled again to chaos; but there's none.
Thy skill, Romont, consists in camps, not courts,
Farewel, uncivil man! let's meet no more:
Here our long web of friendship I untwist.
Shall I go wbine, walk pale, and lock my wife
For nothing from her birth's free liberty,
That open'd mine to me? Yes; if I do,
The name of cuckold then dog me with scorn:
I am a Frenchman, no Italian born. (Exit.)*

It is plain that Altamont at least was an exception to this remark upon *Italian* husbands. I shall pursue this comparison no further, nor offer any other remark upon the incident of the blow given by Altamont, except with regard to Horatio's conduct upon receiving it; he draws his sword, and immediately suspends resentment upon the following motive:

Ya

*Yet bold! By Heav'n, his father's in his face!
Spite of my wrongs, my heart runs o'er with tender-
ness,
And I could rather die myself than hurt him.*

We must suppose it was the martial attitude that Altamont had put himself into, which brought the resemblance of his father so strongly to the observation of Horatio, otherwise it was a very unnatural moment to recollect it in, when he had just received the deepest insult one man can give to another: It is however worth a remark, that this father of Altamont should act on both sides, and yet miscarry in his mediation; for it is but a few passages before that Altamont says to Horatio,

*Thou wert my father's friend; he lov'd thee well;
A venerable mark of him
Hangs round thee, and protects thee from my ven-
geance.
I cannot, dare not lift my sword against thee.*

What this *mark* was is left to conjecture; but it is plain it was as seasonable for Horatio's rescue at this moment, as it was for Altamont a few moments after, who had certainly overlooked it when he struck the very friend against whom he could not, dared not lift *his sword*.

When Lavinia's entrance has parted Alta-

mont and Horatio, her husband complains to her of the ingratitude with which he has been treated, and says—

*He, who was all to me, child, brother, friend,
With barbarous bloody malice fought my life.*

These are very extraordinary terms for a man like Horatio to use, and seem to convey a charge very unfit for him to make, and of a very different nature from the hasty insult he had received; in fact it appears as if the blow had totally reversed his character, for the resolution he takes in consequence of this personal affront is just such an one as would be only taken by the man who dared not to resent it—

*From Genoa, from falsehood and inconstancy,
To some more honest distant clime we'll go :
Nor will I be beholden to my country
For aught but thee, the partner of my flight.*

That Horatio's heroism did not consist in the ready forgiveness of injuries is evident from the obstinate sullenness with which he rejects the penitent apologies of Altamont in the further progress of the play; I am at a loss therefore to know what colour the poet meant to give his character by disposing him to quit his country with this insult unatoned for, and the additional

stigma upon him of running away from his appointment with Lothario for the next morning *amongst the rocks*. Had he meant to bring him off upon the repugnance he felt of resenting any injury against the son of a father, whose image was so visible *in his face*, that his heart ran *e'er with fondness in spite of his wrongs*, and he could rather die than hurt him; surely that image would have interceded no less powerfully for him, when, penetrated with remorse, he intercedes for pity and forgiveness, and even faints at his feet with agony at his unrelenting obduracy: It would be unfair to suppose he was more like his father when he had dealt him an insulting blow, than when he was atoning for an injury by the most ample satisfaction and submission.

This is the light in which the conduct of Horatio strikes me; if I am wrong, I owe an atonement to the manes of an elegant poet, which, upon conviction of my error, I will study to pay in the fullest manner I am able.

It now remains only to say a few words upon the catastrophe, in which the author varies from his original, by making Calista destroy herself with a dagger, put into her hand for that purpose by her father: If I am to moralize upon this proceeding of Sciolto, I know full well the incident cannot bear up against it; a Roman

father would stand the discussion better than a Christian one; and I also know that the most natural expedient is unluckily a most undramatic one; yet the poet did not totally overlook it, for he makes Sciolto's first thought turn upon a convent, if I rightly understand the following passage—

*Hence from my sight ! thy father cannot bear thee :
Fly with thy infamy to some dark cell,
Where, on the confines of eternal night,
Mourning, misfortunes, cares and anguish dwell ;
Where ugly Shame hides her opprobrious head,
And Death and Hell detested rule maintain ;
There bowl out the remainder of thy life,
And wish thy name may be no more remember'd.*

Whilst I am transcribing these lines a doubt strikes me that I have misinterpreted them, and yet Calista's answer seems to point to the meaning I had suggested; perhaps however they are mere ravings in fine numbers without any determinate idea: Whatever they may be, it is clear they do not go to the length of death: He tells Altamont, as soon as she is departed—

*I wo' not kill her ;
Yet by the ruin she has brought upon us,
The common infamy that brands us both,
She sha' not 'scape.*

He

He seems in this moment to have formed the resolution, which he afterwards puts into execution; he prompts her to self-murder, and arms her for the act: This may save the spectators a fight too shocking to behold, but does it convey less horror to the heart, than if he had put her to death with his own hand? A father killing his child for incontinence with the man whom he had not permitted to marry her, when he solicited his consent, is an act too monstrous to reflect upon: Is that father less a monster, who, deliberately and after full reflection, puts a dagger into her hand and bids her commit self-murder? I should humbly conceive the latter act a degree in guilt beyond the former; especially when I hear that father coolly demanding of his victim, if she has reflected upon what may happen after death—

*Hast thou consider'd what may happen after it?
How thy account may stand, and what to answer?*

A parent surely would turn that question upon his own heart before he precipitated his unprepared child to so awful and uncertain an account: Rage and instant revenge may find some plea; sudden passion may transport even a father to lift his hand against his own offspring; but
this

this act of Sciolto has no shelter but in heathen authority—

*'Tis justly thought, and worthy of that spirit,
That dwelt in antient Latian breasts, when Rome
Was mistress of the world.*

Did ever poetry beguile a man into such an allusion? And to what does that piece of information tend, *that Rome was mistress of the world*? If this is human nature, it would almost tempt one to reply in Sciolto's own words—

I cou'd curse nature,

But it is no more like nature, than the following sentiments of Calista are like the sentiments of a *Penitent*, or a Christian—

*That I must die it is my only comfort ;
Death is the privilege of human nature,
And life without it were not worth our taking——*

And again,

*Yet Heav'n, who knows our weak imperfect natures,
How blind with passions, and how prone to evil,
Makes not too strict enquiry for offences,
But is aton'd by penitence and prayer.
Cheap recompence ! here 'twou'd not be receiv'd ;
Nothing but blood can make the expiation.*

Such

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Such is the catastrophe of Rowe's *Fair Penitent*, such is the representation he gives us of human nature, and such the moral of his tragedy.

I shall conclude with an extract or two from the catastrophe of *The Fatal Dowry*; and first, for the *penitence* of Beaumelle, I shall select only the following speech, addressed to her husband :

*I dare not move you
To bear me speak. I know my fault is far
Beyond qualification or excuse ;
That 'tis not fit for me to hope, or you
To think of mercy ; only I presume
To intreat you wou'd be pleas'd to look upon
My sorrow for it, and believe these tears
Are the true children of my grief, and not
A woman's cunning.*

I need not point out the contrast between this and the quotations from Calista. It will require a longer extract to bring the conduct of Rochfort into comparison with that of Sciolto : The reader will observe that Novall's dead body is now on the scene, Charalois, Beaumelle, and Rochfort her father, are present. The charge of adultery is urged by Charalois, and appeal is made to the justice of Rochfort in the case.

Rochfort.

Rochfort. *What answer makes the prisoner ?*

Beaumelle. *I confess*

*The fact I'm charg'd with, and yield myself
Most miserably guilty.*

Rochfort. *Heaven take mercy*

*Upon your soul then ! It must leave your body—
—Since that the politic law provides that servants,
To whose care we commit our goods, shall die
If they abuse our trust ; what can you look for,
To whose charge this most hopeful Lord gave up
All he receiv'd from his brave ancestors,
All he cou'd leave to his posterity ?
His honour—Wicked woman ! in whose safety
All his life's joys and comforts were lock'd up,
Which thy lust, a thief, hath now stolen from him !
And therefore——*

Charalois. *Stay, just Judge—May not what's lost
By her one fault (for I am charitable,
And charge her not with many) be forgotten
In her fair life hereafter ?*

Rochfort. *Never, Sir !*

*The wrong that's done to the chaste married bed,
Repentant tears can never expiate :
And be assur'd to pardon such a sin,
Is an offence as great as to commit it.*

In consequence of this the husband strikes her dead before her father's eyes : The act indeed is horrid ; even tragedy shrinks from it, and Nature with a father's voice instantly cries out—*Is she dead then ?—and you have kill'd her ?*—Charalois

N^o 90. THE OBSERVER. 301

avows it, and pleads his sentence for the deed ; the revolting, agonized parent breaks forth into one of the most pathetic, natural and expressive lamentations, that the English drama can produce—

—But I pronounc'd it

*As a Judge only, and a friend to justice,
And, zealous in defence of your wrong'd honour,
Broke all the ties of nature, and cast off
The love and soft affection of a father :
I in your cause put on a scarlet robe
Of red dy'd cruelty ; but in return
You have advanc'd for me no flag of mercy :
I look'd on you as a wrong'd husband, but
You clos'd your eyes against me as a father.
Oh, Beaumelle ! Oh, my daughter !—*

Charalois. *This is madness.*

Rochfort. *Keep from me !—Cou'd not one good
thought rise up*

*To tell you that she was my age's comfort,
Begot by a weak man, and born a woman,
And cou'd not therefore but partake of frailty ?
Or wherefore did not thankfulness step forth
To urge my many merits, which I may
Object to you, since you prove ungrateful ?
Flinty-hearted Charalois !—*

Charalois. *Nature does prevail above your virtue.*

What conclusions can I draw from these comparative examples, which every reader would not anticipate ?

anticipate? Is there a man, who has any feeling for real nature, dramatic character, moral sentiment, tragic pathos or nervous diction, who can hesitate, even for a moment, where to bestow the palm?

N° XCI.

An toti morimur?

(SENECA IN TROAD.)

I Believe there are few people, who have not at some time or other felt a propensity to humour themselves in that kind of melancholy, which arises in the mind upon revisiting the scene of former happiness, and contemplating the change that time has wrought in its appearance by the mournful comparison of present with past impressions.

In this train of thought I was the other day carried almost imperceptibly to the country seat of a deceased friend, whose loss I must ever lament. I had not been there since his death, and there was a dreariness in the scene as I approached, that might have almost tempted me to believe even things

things inanimate partook of my sensations. The traces of my friend, whose solicitude for order and seemliness reached to every thing about him, were no longer to be seen : The cottages and little gardens of his poor neighbours, which used to be so trim and neat, whilst his eye was over them, seemed to be falling into neglect ; the lawn before his house was now become a solitude ; no labourers at their work ; no domestics at their sports and exercises : I looked around for my old acquaintance, that used to be grazing up and down upon their pensions of pasturage ; they had probably been food for hounds long ago ; Nature had lost her smile of hospitality and benevolence ; methought I never saw any thing more disconsolate.

As I entered the house, an aged woman, whom I had long remembered as one of the family, met me in the passage, and, looking me in the face, cried out, " Is it you, Sir ?"—and burst into tears : She followed me into the common sitting-room, and as she was opening the shutters, observed to me—" That it did not look as it used to do, when my lord was living." It was true ; I had already made the remark in silence :—" How the face of a friend," said I within myself, " enlivens all things about him ! " What hours of placid delight have I passed
" within

“ within these walls ! Have I ever heard a word
 “ here fall from his lips, that I have wished him
 “ to recall ? Has the reputation of the absent
 “ ever bled by a stab of his giving ? Has the
 “ sensibility of any person present suffered for an
 “ expression of his ? Once, and only once, in
 “ this very spot, I drew from him the circum-
 “ stantial detail of an unfortunate period in his
 “ life : It was a recital so manly and ingenuous,
 “ so void of colouring, so disdainful of complaint
 “ and so untainted by asperity, that it carried
 “ conviction to my mind, and I can scarce con-
 “ ceive a degree of prejudice that could have
 “ held out against it ; but I could perceive that
 “ the greatest event in a man’s history may turn
 “ by springs so subtle and concealed, that they
 “ can never be laid open for public exculpation,
 “ and that in the process of all human trials
 “ there may be things too small for the fingers
 “ of the law to feel ; motives, which produce
 “ the good or ill fortunes of men and govern
 “ their actions, but which cannot guide the
 “ judgments, or even come under the con-
 “ templation of those who are appointed to de-
 “ cide upon them.”

I soon quitted this apartment, and entered one
 which I contemplated with more satisfaction, and
 even with a degree of veneration ; for it was the
 the

the chamber, in which I had seen my friend yield up the last breath of life. Few men had endured greater persecution in the world ; none could leave it in greater peace and charity : If forgiveness of injuries constitutes a merit, our enemies surely are those to whom we are most beholden. How awful is the last scene of a man's life, who has filled a dubious and important part on the stage of the world !—" Of " a truth," thought I, " thou art happily re- " moved out of an unfriendly world ; if thou " hadst deceived my good opinion, it had been " an injury to my nature : But though the living " man can wear a mask and carry on deceit, the " dying Christian cannot counterfeit : Sudden " death may smite the hypocrite, the sensualist, " the impostor, and they may die in their shame ; " but slow and gradual dissolution, a lingering " death of agony and decay, will strip the human " heart before it seizes it ; it will lay it naked, " before it stops it. There is no trifling with " some solemnities ; no prevaricating with God, " when we are on the very threshold of his pre- " sence : Many worldly friendships dissolve away " with his breath to whom they were pledged ; " but thy last moments, my friend, were so em- " ployed as to seal my affection to thy memory " closer than it was ever attached to thy person ;

“ and I have it now to say, there was a man,
 “ whom I have loved and served, and who has
 “ not deceived or betrayed me,”

And what must I now think of popularity, when I reflect upon those who had it, and upon this man, who had it not ? Fallacious test !—Contemptible pursuit ! How often, since the exile of Aristides, has integrity been thy victim and villany thine idol ? Worship it then, thou filthy idolater, and take the proper wages of thy servility ; be the dupe of cunning, and the stalking-horse of hypocrisy.

What a contrast to the death I have now been reviewing, occurs to my mind, when I reflect upon the dreadful consummation of the once popular *Antitheüs* ! I remember him in the height of his fame, the hero of his party ; no man so carested, followed and applauded : He was a little loose, his friends would own, in his moral character, but then he was the honestest fellow in the world ; it was not to be denied, that he was rather free in his notions, but then he was the best creature living. I have seen men of the gravest characters wink at his fallies, because he was so pleasant and so well bred, it was impossible to be angry with him. Every thing went well with him, and *Antitheüs* seemed to be at the summit of human prosperity,

prosperity, when he was suddenly seized with the most alarming symptoms: He was at his country house, and (which had rarely happened to him) he at that time chanced to be alone; wife or family he had none, and out of the multitude of his friends no one happened to be near him at the moment of this attack.

A neighbouring physician was called out of bed in the night to come to him with all haste in this extremity: He found him sitting up in his bed supported by pillows, his countenance full of horror, his breath struggling as in the article of death, his pulse intermitting, and at times beating with such rapidity as could hardly be counted. *Antitheüs* dismissed the attendants he had about him, and eagerly demanded of the physician, if he thought him in danger: The physician answered that he must fairly tell him he was in imminent danger—*How so! how so! do you think me dying?*—He was sorry to say the symptoms indicated death.—*Impossible! you must not let me die: I dare not die: O doctor! save me, if you can.*—Your situation, Sir, is such, said the physician, that it is not in mine, or any other man's art, to save you; and I think I should not do my duty, if I gave you any false hopes in these moments, which, if I am not mistaken, will not more than suffice for

any worldly or other concerns, which you may have upon your mind to settle.—*My mind is full of horror*, cried the dying man, *and I am incapable of preparing it for death*.—He now fell into an agony, accompanied with a shower of tears; a cordial was administered, and he revived in a degree; when turning to the physician, who had his fingers on his pulse, he eagerly demanded of him, if he did not see that blood upon the foot-curtains of his bed. There was none to be seen the physician assured him; it was nothing but a vapour of his fancy.—*I see it plainly*, said Anti-theüs, *in the shape of a human hand: I have been visited with a tremendous apparition. As I was lying sleepless in my bed this night, I took up a letter of a deceased friend, to dissipate certain thoughts that made me uneasy. I believed him to be a great philosopher, and was converted to his opinion: Persuaded by his arguments and my own experience that the disorderly affairs of this evil world could not be administered by any wise, just or provident Being, I had brought myself to think no such Being could exist, and that a life, produced by chance, must terminate in annihilation: This is the reasoning of that letter, and such were the thoughts I was revolving in my mind, when the apparition of my dead friend presented itself before me; and, unfolding the curtains of my bed, stood at my feet, looking earnestly upon*

upon me for a considerable space of time. My heart sunk within me; for his face was ghastly, full of horror, with an expression of such anguish as I can never describe: His eyes were fixed upon me, and at length with a mournful motion of his head—"Alas, alas!" he cried, "we are in a fatal error"—and taking hold of the curtains with his hand, shook them violently and disappeared.—This, I protest to you, I both saw and heard, and look! where the print of his hand is left in blood upon the curtains.

Antitheüs survived the relation of this vision very few hours, and died delirious in great agonies.

What a forsaken and disconsolate creature is a man without religion!

Reader, whosoever thou art, deceive not thyself; let not passion, or prosperity, or wit, or wantonness, seduce thy reason to an attempt against the truth. If thou hast the faculties of a man, thou wilt never bring thyself to a fixed persuasion that there is no God: Struggle how thou wilt against the notion, there will be a moment when the glaring conviction will burst upon thy mind. Now mark what follows—If there is a God, the government of the world is in that God; and this once admitted, the necessity of a future state follows of consequence. Ask thyself then, what can be the purposes of that future

state; what, but those of justice and retribution, to reward the good, and to punish the evil? Our present life then is a life of probation, a state of trial and of discipline, preparatory to that future state. Now see what is fallen upon thee, and look well to thyself for the consequences: Thou hast let the idea of a God into thy mind, because indeed thou couldst not keep it out, and religion rushes through the breach. It is natural religion hitherto, and no more: But no matter; there is enough even in natural religion to make thee tremble. Whither wilt thou now resort for comfort, whither fly for refuge from the wrath to come?—Behold the asylum is open, Christianity is thy salvation and redemption: That, which natural religion hath shadowed out to thee in terrors, Christianity will reveal in glory: It will clear up thy doubts, disperse thy fears, and turn thy hopes into certainty. Thy reasonings about a future state, which are but reasonings, it will not only verify by divine authorities, but by positive proof, by visible example, attested by witnesses, confirmed by the evidence of the senses, and uncontradicted by the history of ages. Now thou wilt know to thy comfort, that there is a Mediator gone before thee, who will help out thy imperfect atonement, when thou art brought to judgment in a future state. Thou wilt indeed be told for
certain,

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certain, that this life is a state of probation, and that thou shalt be brought to account for thine actions; but thou wilt be taught an easy lesson of salvation; thou wilt be cheared with the mercies of thy God, and comforted with the assurance of pardon, if thou wilt heartily turn to repentance: Thou wilt find that all this system of religion is conformable to those natural notions, which reason suggested to thee before, with this advantage, that it makes them clearer, purifies, refines, enlarges them; shuts out every dismal prospect, opens all that is delightful, and *points a road to Heaven through paths of peace and pleasantness.*

Nº XCII.

I DO not know a man in England better received in the circles of the great than *Jack Gayles*: Though he has no one quality for which he ought to be respected, and some points in his character for which he should be held in detestation, yet his manners are externally so agreeable, and his temper generally so social, that he makes a holiday in every family where he visits. He lives with the nobility upon the easiest ^{no} footing, and in the great houses

houses where he is in habits of intimacy, he knows all the domestics by name, and has something to say to every one of them upon his arrival: He has a joke with the butler at the side-board during dinner, and sets the footman a tittering behind his chair, and is so comical and so familiar—He has the best receipt book in England, and recommends himself to the cook by a new sauce, for he is in the secrets of the King's kitchen at Versailles: He has the finest breed of spaniels in Europe, and is never without a puppy at the command of a friend: He knows the theory of hunting from top to bottom, is always in with the hounds, can develop every hit in a check, and was never known to cheer a wrong dog in a cover, when he gives his tongue: If you want an odd horse to match your set, Jack is your man; and for a neat travelling carriage, there is not an item that he will not superintend, if you are desirous to employ him; he will be at your door with it, when the builder brings it home, to see that nothing is wanting, he is so ready and so obliging: No man canvasses a county or borough like Jack Gayles; he is so pleasant with the freeholders, and has so many songs and such facetious toasts, and such a way with him amongst their wives and daughters, that flesh and blood cannot hold out against him: In short,

he is the best leader of a mob, and of course *the honestest fellow in England*.

A merchant's daughter of great fortune married him for love; he ran away with her from a boarding-school, but her father after a time was reconciled to his son-in-law, and Jack, during the life of the good man, passed his time in a small country house on Clapham Common, superintending the concerns of about six acres of ground; being very expert however in the gardens and grape-house, and a very sociable fellow over a bottle with the citizen and his friends on a Saturday and Sunday, he became a mighty favourite: All this while he lived upon the best terms with his wife; kept her a neat little parlour, and regularly took his airing on the common by her side in the most uxorious manner: She was in fact a most excellent creature, of the sweetest temper and mildest manners, so that there seemed no interruption to their happiness, but what arose from her health, which was of a delicate nature. After a few years the citizen died, and Jack, whose conviviality had given him a helping hand out of the world, found himself in possession of a very handsome sum of money upon casting up his affairs at his decease.

Jack Gayles having no further purpose to serve, saw no occasion to consult appearances any longer,

longer, and began to form connexions, in which he did not think it necessary for his wife to have a share. He now set out upon the pursuit of what the world calls pleasure, and soon found himself in the company of those whom the world calls the Great. He had the address to recommend himself to his new acquaintance, and used great dispatch in getting rid of his old ones: His wife was probably his greatest incumbrance on this occasion; but Jack possessed one art in perfection, which stood him in great stead; he had the civillest way of insulting that could be imagined; and as the feelings of his wife were those of the fondest susceptibility, operating upon a weak and delicate constitution, he succeeded to admiration in tormenting her by neglect, at the same time that he never gave her a harsh expression, and in particular, when any body else was present, behaved himself towards her in so obliging a manner, that all his acquaintance set him down as the best tempered fellow living, and her as a lady, by his report, rather captious and querulential. When he had thus got the world on his side, he detached himself more and more from her society, and became less studious to disguise the insults he put upon her: She declined fast in her health, and certain symptoms began to appear, which convinced Jack that a perseverance in his system

would in a short time lay her in the grave, and leave him without any further molestation. Her habit was consumptive, for where is the human frame that can long resist the agony of the heart? In this extremity she requested the assistance of a certain physician, very eminent in these cases: This little gentleman has a way of hitting off the complaints of his patients, which is not always so convenient to those expectant parties, who have made up their minds and reconciled themselves to the call of nature. As Jack had one object, and the Doctor another, they did not entirely agree in their process, and she was sent down by her husband into a distant county for the benefit of the air, in a low situation and a damp house. Jack and the physician had now a scene of altercation, in which it was evident that the least man of the two had the greatest spirit and the largest heart, and Jack certainly put up with some expressions, which could only be passed over by perfect innocence or absolute cowardice: The little Doctor, who had no objection to send Jack out of the world, and a very longing desire to keep his lady in it, spoke like a man who had long been in the practice of holding death at defiance; but what Jack lost in argument he made up in address, and after professing his acquiescence in the measures of his antagonist, he silently determined

terminated to pursue his own, and the Doctor's departure was very soon followed by that of his patient. The dying wife made a feeble stand for a while, but what can a broken heart do against a hardened one?

After Jack had taken such zealous pains to over-rule the Doctor's advice, it is not to be supposed but he would have accompanied his wife to the place of her destination, if it had been only for the satisfaction of contemplating the effects of his own greater sagacity in her case; and he protested to her, in the kindest manner, that nothing should have robbed him of the pleasure of attending her on the journey, but the most indispensable and unexpected business: He had just then received letters from two friends, which would be attended with the greatest breach of honour, if neglected; and she knew his nicety of principle in those affairs: He would not read them to her, as she was in too weak a condition (he observed) to attend to business, but she might rest assured, he would, if possible, overtake her on the way, or be with her in a few hours after her arrival, for he should be impatient to be a witness of her recovery, which he persuaded himself would soon take place, when she had made experiment of the place he had chosen for her. When he had finished his apology, his wife raised

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raised her eyes from the ground, where she had fixed them whilst he was speaking, and with a look of such mild languor, and such dying softness, as would almost have melted marble into pity, mournfully replied—*farewell!*—and resigning herself to the support of her maid and a nurse, was lifted into her carriage, and left her husband to pursue his business without reproach.

Jack Gayles now lost no further time in fulfilling the promise he had made to his wife, and immediately began to apply himself to the letters, which had so indispensably prevented him from paying her those kind offices, which her situation was in so much need of. These letters I shall now insert, as some of my readers may probably think he wants a justification on this occasion. The first was from a great lady of unblemished reputation, who has a character for public charity and domestic virtues, which even malice has not dared to impeach. Her ladyship was now at her country seat, where she presided at a table of the most splendid hospitality, and regulated a princely establishment with consummate judgment and decorum: In this great family Jack had long been a welcome visiter, and as he had received a thousand kindnesses at her hands, gratitude would dispose him to consider her requests

quests as commands the most pressing. The important contents were as follows, viz.

Dear Jack,

I am sorry your wife's so sick; but methinks you'd do well to change the scene, and come amongst us, now home's so dull. You'll be griev'd to hear I have clapp'd Tom Jones in the back sinews: Ned has put a charge to him, but he is so cruelly let down, I am afraid he must be scor'd with a fine iron, and that will be an eye-sore, to say no worse on't. My lord you know hates writing, so he bids me tell you to bring Moll Ross with you, as he thinks there is a young man here will take her off your hands; and as you have had the best of her, and she is rather under your weight, think you'll be glad to get well out of her. Would you believe it, I was eight hours in the saddle yesterday: We dug a fox in Lady Tabby's park: The old Dowager goes on setting traps; all the country round cries out upon it: Thank the fates, she had a py'd peacock and a whole brood of Guinea fowls carried off last night: My lord says 'tis a judgment upon her. Don't forget to bring your Highland tarrier, as I would fain have a cross with my bitch Cruel.

Dear Jack, your's,

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As Jack Gayles was not one of those milk-sops, who let family excuses stand in the way of the more amiable office of obliging his friends, and saw in its just light the ridicule he would naturally expose himself to, if he sheltered himself under so silly a pretence as a wife's sickness, he would infallibly have obeyed her ladyship's commands, and set out with the Highland tarrier instead of Mrs. Gayles, if he had not been divided by another very pressing attention, which every man of the world will acknowledge the importance of. There was a certain young lady of easy virtue, who had made a tender impression on his heart as he was innocently taking the air in Hyde Park: He had prevailed so far with her as to gain her consent to an appointment for that day; not foreseeing, as I should suppose, or perhaps not just at that moment recollecting his wife's journey, and the call there would be upon him on that account. This young lady, who was wanting in no other virtue but chastity, had learnt some particulars of Mr. Gayles, which she had not been informed of when she yielded to the assignation, and in consequence had written him the following perplexing billet:

Sir,

*I am sorry it is not possible for me to receive the
honour*

honour of your visit, and the more so, as I am afraid my reason for declining it, though insuperable with me, will not appear a sufficient one in your opinion. I have just now been informed that you are a married man; this would have been enough, if I had not heard it with the addition, that your Lady is one of the most excellent and most injured women living—if indeed she be yet living, for I learn from the same authority that she is in the last stage of a rapid decline.

In what light must I regard myself, if I was to supply you with a motive for neglecting that attention, which her situation demands of you? Don't let it surprize you, that a woman who has forfeited her claim to modesty, should yet retain some pretensions to humanity: If you have renounced both the one and the other, I have a double motive for declining your acquaintance.

I am, &c.

* *.

The stile of this letter seemed so extraordinary to Jack, and so unlike what he had been used to receive from correspondents of this lady's description, that it is not to be wondered at, if it threw him into a profound meditation: Not that the rebuke made any other impression on him, than as it seemed to involve a mystery, which

which he could not expound; for it never entered into his head to suppose that the writer was in earnest. In this dilemma he imparted it to a friend, and with his usual gaiety desired his help to unriddle it: His friend perused it, and with a serious countenance told him he was acquainted with the lady, and gave her perfect credit for the sincerity of the sentiments it contained: She was a romantic girl, he told him, and not worth a further thought; but as he perceived he was chagrined with the affair, he advised him to take post for the country, and attend the summons of his noble correspondent, for that he himself had always found the dissipation of a journey the best remedy in all cases of vexation, like the present. This friendly advice was immediately followed by an order for the journey, and Jack Gayles put himself into his post-chaise, with his tarrier by his side, ordering his groom to follow with Moll Rofs by easy stages.

Whilst Jack was rapidly posting towards the house of jollity and dissipation, his suffering and forsaken wife by slow stages pursued her last melancholy journey: Supported in her coach by her two women, and attended by an old man servant of her father's, she at last reached the allotted house, where her miseries were to find a period. One indiscretion only, a stolen and precipitate

marriage, had marked her life with a blemish, and the husband, who in early youth had betrayed her artless affection into that fatal mistake, was now the chosen instrument of chastisement. She bore her complicated afflictions with the most patient resignation; neither sickness nor sorrow forced a complaint from her; and Death, by the gentleness of his advances, seemed to lay aside his terrors, and approach her with respect and pity.

Jack was still upon his visit, when he received the news of her death: This event obliged him to break off from a most agreeable party, and take a journey to London; but as the season had happened to set in for a severe frost, and the fox-hounds were confined to their kennel, he had the consolation to reflect that his amusements were not so much interrupted as they might have been. He gave orders for a handsome funeral, and departed himself with such outward propriety on the occasion, that all the world gave him credit for his behaviour, and he continues to be the same popular character amongst his acquaintance, and universally carested: In short, Jack Gayless (to use the phrase of fashion) is *the honestest fellow in England*, and—a disgrace to human nature.

N° XCIII.

BEING now arrived at the conclusion of my Third Volume, and having hitherto given my readers very little interruption in my own person, I hope I may be permitted to make one short valedictory address to these departing adventurers, in whose success I am naturally so much interested.

I have employed much time and care in rearing up these Essays to what I conceived maturity, and qualifying them, as far as I was able, to shift for themselves, in a world where they are to inherit no popularity from their author, nor to look for any favour but what they can earn for themselves. To any, who shall question them who they are, and whence they come, they may truly answer—*We are all one man's sons*—we are indeed *Observers*, but *no Spies*. If this shall not suffice, and they must needs give a further account of themselves, they will have to say, that he who sent them into the world, sent them as an offering of his good-will to mankind; that he trusts they have been so trained as not to hurt the feelings or offend the principles of any man, who shall admit them into his company; and that for their errors (which he cannot doubt are many)

many) he hopes they will be found errors of the understanding, not of the heart: They are the first-fruits of his leisure and retirement; and as the mind of a man in that situation will naturally bring the past scenes of active life under its examination and review, it will surely be considered as a pardonable zeal for being yet serviceable to mankind, if he gives his experience and observations to the world, when he has no further expectations from it on the score of fame or fortune. These are the real motives for the publication of these Papers, and this the Author's true state of mind: To serve the cause of morality and religion is his first ambition; to point out some useful lessons for amending the education and manners of young people of either sex, and to mark the evil habits and unsocial humours of men, with a view to their reformation, are the general objects of his undertaking. He has formed his mind to be contented with the consciousness of these honest endeavours, and with a very moderate share of success: He has ample reason notwithstanding to be more than satisfied, with the reception these Papers have already had in their probationary excursion; and it is not from any disgust, taken up in a vain conceit of his own merits, that he has more than once observed
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upon the frauds and follies of popularity, or that he now repeats his opinion, that it is the worst guide a public man can follow, who wishes not to go out of the track of honesty; for at the same time that he has seen men force their way in the world by effrontery, and heard others applauded for their talents, whose only recommendation has been their ingenuity in wickedness, he can recollect very few indeed, who have succeeded, either in fame or fortune, under the disadvantages of modesty and merit.

To such readers, as shall have taken up these Essays with a candid disposition to be pleased, he will not scruple to express a hope that they have not been altogether disappointed; for though he has been unassisted in composing them, he has endeavoured to open a variety of resources, sensible that he had many different palates to provide for. The subject of politics, however, will never be one of these resources; a subject which he has neither the will nor the capacity to meddle with. There is yet another topic, which he has been no less studious to avoid, which is personality; and though he professes to give occasional delineations of living manners, and not to make men in his closet (as some Essayists have done) he does not mean to point at individuals; for as this is a practice
which

which he has ever rigidly abstained from when he mixed in the world, he should hold himself without the excuse, even of temptation, if he was now to take it up, when he has withdrawn himself from the world.

In the *Essays* (which he has presumed to call *Literary*, because he cannot strike upon any apposite title of an humbler sort) he has studied to render himself intelligible to readers of all descriptions, and the deep-read scholar will not fastidiously pronounce them shallow, only because he can fathom them with ease; for that would be to wrong both himself and their author, who, if there is any vanity in a pedantic margin of references, certainly resisted that vanity, and as certainly had it at his choice to have loaded his page with as great a parade of authorities, as any of his brother writers upon classical subjects have ostentatiously displayed. But if any learned critic, now or hereafter, shall find occasion to charge these *Essays* on the score of false authority or actual error, their author will most thankfully meet the investigation; and the fair Reviewer shall find that he has either candour to adopt correction, or materials enough in reserve to maintain every warrantable assertion.

The Moralist and the Divine, it is hoped, will
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here find nothing to except against; it is not likely such an offence should be committed by one, who has reposed all his hope in that Revelation, on which his faith is founded; whom nothing could ever divert from his aim of turning even the gayest subjects to moral purposes, and who reprobates the jest, which provokes a laugh at the expence of a blush.

The Essays of a critical sort are no less addressed to the moral objects of composition, than to those which they have more professedly in view: They are not undertaken for the invidious purpose of developing errors, and stripping the laurels of departed poets, but simply for the uses of the living. The specimens already given, and those which are intended to follow in the further prosecution of the work, are proposed as disquisitions of instruction rather than of subtlety; and if they shall be found more particularly to apply to dramatic compositions, it is because their author looks up to the stage, as the great arbiter of more important delights, than those only which concern the taste and talents of the nation; it is because he sees with serious regret the buffoonery and low abuse of humour to which it is sinking, and apprehends for the consequences such an influx of folly may lead to. It will be readily

dily granted there are but two modes of combating this abasement of the drama with any probability of success: One of these modes is, by an exposition of some one or other of the productions in question, which are supposed to contribute to its degradation; the other is, by inviting the attention of the public to an examination of better models, in which the standard works of our early dramatists abound. If the latter mode therefore should be adopted in these Essays, and the former altogether omitted, none of their readers will regret the preference that has been given upon such an alternative.

If the ladies of wit and talents do not take offence at some of these Essays, it will be a test of the truth of their pretensions, when they discern that the raillery, pointed only at affectation and false character, has no concern with them. There is nothing in which this nation has more right to pride itself, than the genius of its women; they have only to add a little more attention to their domestic virtues, and their fame will fly over the face of the globe. If I had ever known a good match broken off on the part of the man, because a young lady had too much modesty and discretion, or was too strictly educated in the duties of a good wife, I hope I understand myself too well to obtrude
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my old-fashioned maxims upon them. They might be as witty as they pleased, if I thought it was for their good ; but if a racer, that has too great a share of heels, must lie by because it cannot be matched, so must every young spinster, if her wits are too nimble. If I could once discover that men chuse their wives, as they do their friends, for their manly achievements and convivial talents, for their being jolly fellows over a bottle, or topping a five-barred gate in a fox-chace, I should then be able to account for the many Amazonian figures I encounter in slouched hats, great-coats and half-boots, and I would not presume to set my face against the fashion ; or if my experience of the fair-sex could produce a single instance in the sect of Sentimentalists, which could make me doubt of the pernicious influence of a *Musidorus* and a *Lady Thimble*, I would not so earnestly have pressed the examples of a *Sappho*, a *Calliope* or a *Melissa*.

The first Numbers of the present collection, to the amount of forty, have already been published ; but being worked off at a country press, I find myself under the painful necessity of dis- continuing the edition. I have availed myself of this opportunity, not only by correcting the imperfections of the first publication, but by

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rendering this as unexceptionable (in the external at least) as I possibly could. I should have been wanting to the public and myself, if the flattering encouragement I have already received had not prompted me to proceed with the work; and if my alacrity in the further prosecution of it shall meet any check, it must arise only from those causes, which no human diligence can controul.

Vos tamen O nostri ne festinate libelli!

Si post fata venit gloria, non propero.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.







